

SPUD TAMSON Out West

By

R. W. CAMPBELL

Author of

"Private SPUD TAMSON."

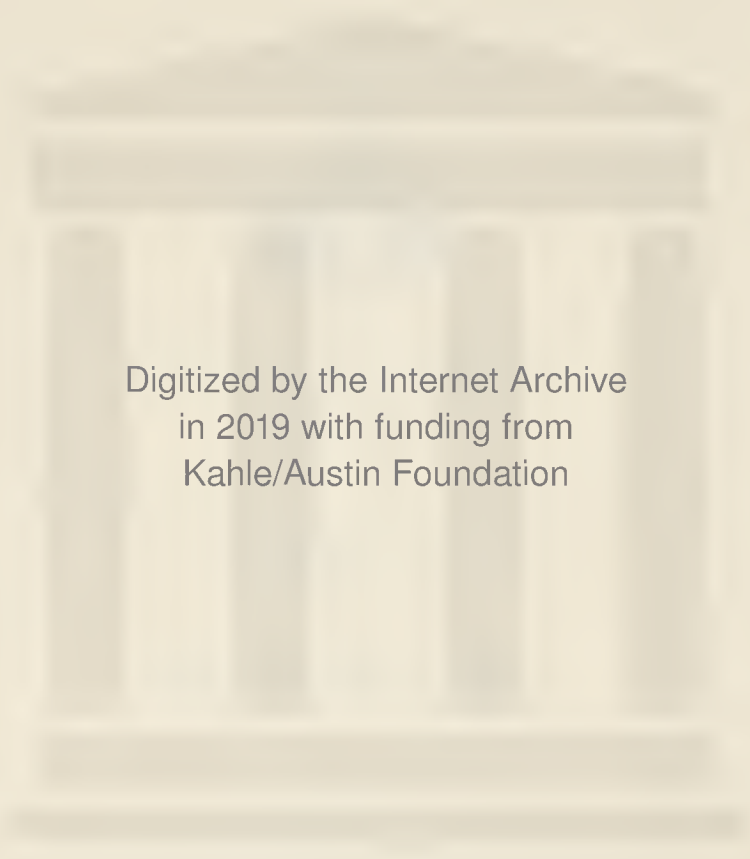
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BY

CAPTAIN R. W. CAMPBELL

Author of

'Private Spud Tamson,' 'Snooker Tam,'
'Jimmy McCallum,' &c.

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TO
SIR GEORGE McLAREN-BROWN
WHOSE GENTLE COURTESY HAS
WON FOR CANADA POWERFUL
ALLIES AND THOUSANDS
OF FRIENDS

196493

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FOREWORD.

MY DEAR BAIRD,—Here is the book. A bundle of sketches designed to rouse the wanderlust, to make the single ticket a Badge of Courage, and to shatter the belief that in paternal legislation, the dead-sure philosophy, and the parish pump, are the remedies for depression in industry, over-population, malnutrition, and the discontent arising out of these. Only yesterday I saw for the first time that there is the model of a sailing-ship attached to the sphere which crowns the Merchant House in George Square, Glasgow. Unless we use the ship as the symbol of commerce, also as a means of commercial salvation to-day, Macaulay's New Zealander may see, too, the ruins of George Square and transpose the old rhyme written around the City coat-of-arms in the following way :

This is the Town that never grew,
This is the Race that never flew,
This is the Boat that never swam,
This is the Bell that never rang.

We owe much to our dour climate, our churches, and our schools, but we also owe a priceless debt to the men who dredged the Clyde, to the men who sailed the Seven Seas, and by so doing made Glasgow the second city of the Empire. The Plain-stanes was the pioneer of the Chamber of Commerce ;

the Broomielaw was the first Wembley; our ancient bailies were good Raleighs who scoured Virginia for 'thick black' and 'bogey roll,' selling in return 'saut herrin,' oatmeal, homespun, Paisley shawls, and high-land dew. Those gallant ancestors were unacquainted with 'something for nothing.' They were individualists who gloried in 'shank's mare,' who revelled in the open road, and many of them cut their way through Canada with the steel shovel and the broad claymore.

Men are growing bald to-day thinking about what to do with their sons. Mothers want Jimmy and Johnny to stay at home, and, by staying, endure genteel poverty in the congested Old Land; and all the while the open road is the secret of success. Kipling once declared that we contented our souls

With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddled oafs at the goals.

That was not borne out by the war; but, strange to say, the war has almost killed the wanderlust. There is a slump in Robinson Crusoes, Scarlet Pimpernels, and Buffalo Bills. The national nose is getting flattened out on the window of the 'Buroo'; the heroic adventure is 'doon the road tae draw the dole.' Canada is 'too near'; Australia is 'ower warm'; New Zealand's 'no' big enough'; and in America 'you've got tae work ower hard.'

If we are going to save Glasgow and the Empire, this sob stuff has to be blown sky-high. A nation like ours, with such glorious traditions, must not

bend the knee to the ten-cent mush of long-haired men who grow mad on economics, who get sea-sick on the *Fairy Queen* in Port Dundas Canal, who have never shoved their nose over the top of the Campsie Hills, and whose only remedy for serious commercial depression and impending bankruptcy is innuendo, intimidation, and the bomb.

By our ships we were made, by our ships we can be saved, and by ships our culture has been enriched an hundredfold. *Treasure Island* is the log-rolling of amusing adventurers; *Robinson Crusoe* is the sustenance of all young Roosevelts and Strathconas; *Typhoon* is the stuff of A1 mariners; *Erewhon* is the beautiful philosophy of a New Zealand shepherd on the hills. Who is afraid of the iron wheels as they rattle down the Beattock Road? Who fears the bracing ozone and the ever-changing beauty of the wide blue sea? Who would not see the pyramids of Egypt, the sun behind the hills of Peshawar, the seaway to the Heights of Abraham, and the glories of God in the wonderful Rocky Mountains? For the rich, the poor, the sick, and the hapless let us have the open road. If we limit the travels of youth between Jamaica Brig and St George's Road, may the Lord help Glasgow! We shall degenerate into a race of bandy-legged chimpanzees with no teeth, and the national dish will be changed from porridge to 'jeely,' saps, and mince.

In closing, permit me to thank you for luring me over the Western Ocean in 1912; also to thank your friend, E. C. Gill, who lured me again in 1922.

You gave me the key of the open road, the pathway to the noble works of manly pioneers, the moods of the prairies, and the mystery of the mountains. All this is the meat of novelists. If I have succeeded in illuminating the cheerfulness and manliness of our race, then your vision is justified.—Faithfully yours,

R. W. CAMPBELL.

WM. BAIRD, ESQ.,
SOMEWHERE IN WEMBLEY,
14th *May* 1924.

Spud Tamson Out West.

CHAPTER I

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE POLICE.

SPUD TAMSON, having completed the harvest work at Farmer Johnson's, in Saskatchewan, was beating the trail towards Mackenzie Creek, where another job was in waiting. It was a good September day, with that nip in the air which makes the prairie healthful and joyful. He was not at all tidy in his appearance; the red hair was long and unruly; he needed a shave, and his clothes were tattered and battered with strenuous days in the harvest-field. But he was as cheerful as of old; his blue eyes sparkled with fun; his face was wreathed in content; between his lips was an old cutty pipe; better still, his pocket was lined with well-earned dollars. He carried a couple of blankets tied over his

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shoulders, and in his right hand was a black billy-can, to make tea on the road. He trudged along, happy as a schoolboy, full of affection for the land which had given him a job, for, like many more, he had grown weary of 'the dole,' and had gone west in search of siller and adventure. Ahead was a steady winter job, which added to his cheerfulness—so much so that he was humming:

Jist a wee deoch-an-doris—
 Jist a wee drap, that's a'—
 Jist a wee deoch-an-doris
 Afore we gang awa'.

This old tune ended abruptly, and the cause was the sudden appearance of a handsome young trooper of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. As is the way of 'The Mounted,' he seemed to have popped up from nowhere. This Adonis was garbed in the famous red coat, blue breeches with yellow braid, brown riding-boots and polished spurs, and on his head was a Stetson hat. He was mounted on a spirited black charger, something like Dick Turpin's famous mount. Against the western sun this young trooper looked a most romantic figure.

In a flash, Spud Tamson caught the glory of 'Scarlet and Gold.' Bang! went all thoughts of his winter contract. He who had worn the red coat of the 'Glesca Mileeshy' decided, on the spot, to have the red coat of the Mounted Police.

'Hi! You on the horse,' Spud shouted to the trooper.

'Well, what do you want?' inquired the policeman, whose accent was suggestive of Harrow or Eton.

'I want tae jine the Polis Force,' was Spud's reply.

'I'm afraid you will find it difficult to do so,' said the policeman, dismounting.

'Whit wey?'

'We prefer public-school boys.'

'But I was at a public schule.'

'Oh!' exclaimed the trooper, suppressing a grin.

'Ay, "Oh!"' retorted Spud, sticking his nose into the trooper's face in the conventional manner of the Gallowgate.

'What school?'

'Doohull! . . . Aff the Gallowgate! Mebbe you'll no' ken it, but that wis the schule that turned oot Wee Maconkie o' the Rangers, Puddin M'Gaw o' the Port-Dundas Rovers, and Jimmy Googan, the

man that scored ten goals against Queen's Park, and killed the goalie o' the Hairts o' Midlothian wi' a dunt o' his heid.'

'I'm afraid you don't understand — a public school is rather exclusive, don't you know.'

'So wis Doohull! Squeak Mackay and Baldy Colquhoun couldnae get intae Doo-hull because they had bandy legs and were saft i' the heid; they went tae Rutherglen. Mebbe you'll no' ken Rutherglen? That's whaur ye buy leminade on wan side o' the street and beer on the ither side.'

'I'm afraid I don't know your country at all.'

'Tell me, then, hoo tae enlist in "The Mounted."'

'Do you know anything about horses?'

'Horses!' exclaimed Spud; 'it's weel seen ye dinnae ken me. I used tae be a jockey for Maister Wordie.'

'Who is he?'

'Him that belangs tae a' the big horses an' wee lorries in Glesca. I wis a trace-boy in Buchanan Street; it wis me that used tae ride "Black Bella," the horse that chowed the heid aff an auld wumin when it wis pullin' a couple o' ton o' tatties up the street. I could tickle its belly an' it

widnae touch me at a'; when I left Wordie's they had tae pit an iron muzzle on it an' send it tae Beljum tae be turned intae sausages.'

'But have you had any experience of Canadian horses?'

'You bet! I've been driving six daft yins in a binder. Couldnae see their legs for stoor. I could kid them on to pu' ony-thing frae an elevator tae a battleship. An' I'm no' a bad vet.; when the broon mare had colic an' consumption o' the bowels, an' wis rowin' aboot the stall like a man efter a feed o' green grossets, I cured it in a jiffy. I tied a rope roon' its nose, then pulled the rope ower the joist, an' when its heid wis weel up I shoved ten hauf-mutchkins o' linseed-oil doon its thrapple. Next mornin' it wis waggin' its tail for corn, an' when I took it tae water it kicked up its heels like a Hielan' slavey on Thursday nichts at Jamaica Brig.'

'Not bad,' said the trooper, who then suggested that intelligence was as important as riding.

'I never heard that before,' Spud replied.

'Explain,' said the trooper.

'I always thocht a polisman had to be strong in the back an' saft in the heid.'

‘We are different in the Mounted Police. Out here we are on our own. How would you distinguish between a burglar and a decent citizen?’

‘That’s easy,’ said Spud. ‘A dacent man works a’ day, but a burglar sleeps wi’ his boots on, his eye on the door, the windae open, an’ a couple o’ dizzen copies o’ the *Christian Herald* in his box tae prove his kirk connection. A poacher mak’s a guid polisman; I used tae catch rabbits at Rouken Glen wi’ six inches o’ black threed, an’ I’ve seen me nippin’ a hare at Campsie wi’ twa twigs an’ a bit o’ tea-twine. I’ve read everything frae Jack the Ripper tae Burke an’ Hare, an’ I could smell my wey frae here tae Vancouver. A Glesca man is like a whippet, an’ can get the scent o’ onything frae a fish-supper tae a gill o’ the best.’

‘Yes; but what would you do if faced with an American gunman with his guns in play?’

‘Dae!’ exclaimed Spud.

‘Yes,’ insisted the trooper.

‘Blaw his —— heid aff; whit else could ye dae?’

‘We seldom shoot; peaceful persuasion is the thing. I’m afraid you are too hot-headed for our job.’

‘Tell me whit you wid dae?’ demanded Spud.

‘I would look at him till he dropped his gun. My red coat is more powerful than a dozen revolvers; we prevent crime—never make it.’

‘I could learn that tae,’ suggested Spud.

‘No doubt, but you must have an all-round knowledge of life on the prairie, and in the woods; also thoroughly understand the habits of men, beasts, and birds. Tracking and sleighing is a man’s job; you might do it—in time.’

Obviously the trooper was not too sure of Spud.

‘Ach awa’!’ exclaimed Spud. Then, after a momentary pause, he explained—‘I’m no’ as green as I’m cabbage-looking. If I had a shave, a hair-cut, an’ my Sunday breeks on I would be as smert as the toffs in Kelvinside. Mebbe you’ll no’ ken it wis me that used tae be Provo’ Corporal o’ the “Glesca Mileeshy.” It wis me that nabbed Otto Sneishmer, the great German spy. The Colonel said I was a born polisman. Otto wis a smert yin, I’m tellin’ ye. He used tae walk aboot ahint oor lines; it wis him that used tae bamboozle oor telephones in the attack. But I nabbed him.’

‘How did you do it?’

‘I got on tae his scent like a wean efter shortbreid. Wan day I wis walkin’ doon the Menin Road, an’ I saw a man in staff-officer’s uniform; he looked the goods, but his neck was kin’ o’ thick, an’ his hair wis like the hedgehog’s—stickin’ oot. Besides, he shoved oot his legs sort o’ stiff—you’ll ken the wey a German sodger walks?’

‘Yes,’ answered the trooper.

‘Says I tae masel’—“This looks suspicious.” So I got in ahint him. When he seemed sort o’ easy and lulled intae a safe sort o’ wey o’ thinkin’, I drew a deep braith an’ bawled oot—“Waitah! waitah!” That’s the wey the toffs dae it, an’ I kent that Otto had been a waiter in The Savoy. Man, he fair stumbled aff his eggs, an’ turned his heid roon’ tae get his orders. But I never let on—jist kept marchin’ on ahint him, so that he didnae ken it wis me. When the column halted for refreshments on the road, Otto went intae an estaminet. The lassie ahint the coonter asked if he would hae wine an’ an omelette. “No,” says he, “I’ll have beer an’ sausages.” That wis clue number two. That nicht he wis huntin’ for a bed in the hotels. I arranged wi’ the Intelligence Officers that there wis jist tae

be twa spare beds—wan in the hoose o' an auld wife wi' a face that wid frichten Burke an' Hare, an' the other in the hoose o' a lovely French lady, wi' a smile that wid mak' a chaplain resign his commission. Otto wis a true German; he barked at the auld wife when she opened the door, but when he saw the lovely yin, he jist walked in an' hung up his hat. Thae Germans are awfu' smert yins efter the weemin. Tae mak' a lang story short, I walked intae the hoose jist as he wis tellin' the bonny yin hoo love wis warmin' the cockles o' his hairt. I opened the door awfu' quietly and shouted—"Cheque, please!" Otto jumped aff his chair as he used tae dae in The Savoy. Says I—"You're Otto Sneishmer . . . Haun's up, or I'll blaw yer heid aff." He wis shot at dawn.'

'Not bad,' said the trooper, who suggested that he should call on Major Wolsley, the officer commanding X Division.

Next morning, Spud Tamson, washed, shaved, and spruce, presented himself as a recruit. The Major, after a long palaver, ultimately decided against, unless he (Spud) could show some striking recommendation in his favour.

‘I think I can dae that, sir,’ Spud replied.

‘What is it?’

‘That wee bit o’ bronze,’ and he placed his V.C. on the table.

‘You’re in, my lad,’ exclaimed the Major, shaking him heartily by the hand.

CHAPTER II.

MATCHMAKING IN SASKATCHEWAN

AFTER a very stiff training in Fort Reginald, Spud Tamson, in the spring of the year, was promoted to command of a one-man detachment at Buffalo Horn Valley, which is on the prairie. His beat was fifty by fifty miles; under his care was an Indian Reservation, also five hundred homesteaders of all nationalities. The detachment was a hut with a flagstaff nailed on to the side; the equipment consisted of one bed, one table, one plate, one bowl, one mug, one copy of the *Police Manual*, and ration incidents for horse and man. No luxuries; that is the way of the Mounted Police.

His duty was to go out on patrol, asking homesteaders for 'any complaints,' and keeping his eyes open for wandering 'guys' from over the border, who are marvels at 'telling the tale' when selling gold-bricks, New Testaments, baked beans, or chewing-gum. He was not only a policeman: he had to act the part of father, friend, and guide. So

great is the prestige of the Mounted Police that all sorts of people seek their advice.

One morning Spud's door opened, and in walked Dugal M'Phail, a Highland homesteader.

'You look glum, Dugal,' Spud remarked.

'I wass worried.'

'Whit aboot?'

'The hoosekeeper.'

'Wha is she?'

'She's chust the finest wumin in Saskatchewan. I haf nefer seen the like of her at all. Agnes has the figure of Flora MacDonald, the cleanest kitchen on the prairie, an' she can milk a coo better than any girl in Canada. I'm chust fair in love with her, but so is my brother Donald; he wants her too.'

'Can ye no' toss up for the lassie?' suggested Spud.

'Mebbe I would lose the toss,' was the cautious reply.

'Is she a Hielander?'

'No; she is a Lowlander—but a fine wumin for a' that.'

'Wid ye no' be better wi' a lass that can chew the tartan, play the chanter, an' sing cumareecumarashinvoyo?'

‘No! I must haf this wumin, or none at all. But young Donald wants her too, an’ he is a good brother to me. Mebbe you can help me,’ Dugal suggested.

‘I’m no’ shair; weemin are like horses—kin’ o’ awkward tae haunle.’

‘But I wass told that “The Mounted” were good at anything.’

‘Mebbe we are, but we cannae haunle weemin like hobos or cattle-rustlers. A’ the same, I’m willin’ tae help ye. But I’ll need tae ken mair aboot the affair. You’re no’ tae think I’m impident, but I’ve got tae ask ye—Hae ye kissed the lassie?’

‘Yes; it was chust fine. She’s a good girl, an’ her kiss wass as pure as the mountain dew,’ Dugal exclaimed with emotion.

‘Whit aboot Donald? Has he kissed her, tae?’

‘I don’t know; but he is in love with her too.’

‘But can ye no’ ask her straight oot tae marry ye? Then ye wid ken if you were the lucky yin.’

‘I’ve tried, but she will not say; she wass frightened to hurt Donald and me. If there were more weemin oot here, we might settle the bother.’

‘Ay, there’s an awfu’ lot o’ compiteetion,’

Spud replied. Then, suddenly inspired, he asked Dugal if he and Donald could clear out of the farm for a day.

‘We haf to go for some machinery to-morrow.’

‘That’s a guid scheme; I’ll try an’ settle the matter for ye when you’re awa’.’

‘Thank you,’ said Dugal, rising and going out.

Spud rode out to the Inverlochan homestead next morning. It was a glorious day—a blue sky and an atmosphere of energy and success. The air of the prairie is bracing; brain and body are always in tune. Pessimism, even in dull times, is almost unknown. The optimism of the West is sincere and wonderful. Gaily the good mare cantered over the well-beaten trail.

‘Hello, Spud!’ shouted Jock Barber from behind a barn on the trail.

‘A fine day,’ said Spud, drawing rein and dismounting; he was seized with the idea of getting more information concerning the Highlander’s love affair.

‘What’s on th’ day?’ inquired Jock.

‘I’m gaun up tae Inverlochan.’

‘I’m no’ envyin’ your job,’ was the comment of Jock Barber.

‘Whit wey?’

‘Weemin are a’ the same. Cannae mak’ up their mind. If she wid marry ane o’ them and settle it, she would stop a lot o’ clash an’ bother.’

‘Mebbe you’re a candidate tae?’ was Spud’s shrewd reply.

‘Mebbe I am; but I’m auld in the horn, bad wi’ indigestion, an’ have tae wear specs through lookin’ doon the^e trail for a wumin body tae warm my hairt an’ tae bake my scones. At hame in Scotland there’s thoo-san’s o’ dacent lassies; but here I am, aged forty, a good ferm, cash in the bank, an’ I’ve got tae bile my ain eggs, an’ darn my socks wi’ string.’

‘Did ye never advertise?’

‘Man, I’ve tried that tae. I spent five dollars in *The Matrimonial News*—a paper frae Dakota. The editor sent an American on tae me. I spent ten dollars on a hair-cut, shave, an’ new suit o’ jeans, but when I got doon tae the station she wis nabbed.’

‘Nabbed?’ exclaimed Spud.

‘Ay! Like a fule, I telt Jock M’Callum frae Dalry. Man, he wis ’cute! He went off the day afore, got intae the train, made it up wi’ her on the way, popped oot at anither station, married her at a manse, an’

left me standin' like a d—— fule on the platform. I didnae mind him gettin' her, but I grudged lossin' fifteen dollars.'

'Did she turn oot weel?'

'An awful failure!' exclaimed Jock.

'Whit was wrang?'

'She didnae ken a coo frae a stot; couldnae cook a haddie; fed the hens on expensive things, instead o' the leavin's o' the kitchen; an', like a' Americans, she made Jock fetch an' carry like a dottle-headed wean. But that's no' a'.'

'Whit then?'

'She hooked it at harvest-time, leaving Jock tae feed five hired men, and sent him a wire frae Dakota askin' for a thoosan' dollars.'

'Whit did Jock dae?'

'Burnt the wire, an' danced a Hielan' fling.'

'Jings! You were lucky.'

'Ay, but still lonely, man! I wis jist thinkin' o' writing tae the Provost o' Glesca. They tell me he fixed up a homesteader wi' as braw an' kind a lass as ever trod the prairie. A' the same, if the Hielan'men up the road dinnae hurry, I think I'll pay my respects tae Agnes. She's a fine lass, kens the run o' a ferm, an' is a credit tae Scot-

land. . . . I'm no' envyin' your job th' day,' was his final comment as Spud mounted and rode away.

Spud found Agnes G—— alone. She was a fine, strapping Ayrshire lassie, with a bonny face, blue eyes, and a cheerful manner.

'Are you the lassie that a' the men are fallin' in love wi'?' said Spud, as he entered the kitchen.

'No' that I'm aware o'; but come awa' in for a cup o' tea. It's no' often we hear our ain tongue up this wey.' And she dusted a chair for him in the good old Lowland way.

As Spud sat down, he remarked that he was there to settle the business.

'Whit business?' she inquired, a little alarmed.

'Aboot you an' the lads. Tell me which yin ye like the best.'

'I like them baith,' was her diplomatic reply.

'That'll no' dae at a'. It's got tae be yin or the ither, or mebbe there'll be a tragedy oot here. . . . Is it Dugal?'

'I'm no' shair,' was the agitated response.

'Is it Donald, then?'

‘I cannae tell.’ Her breast was now heaving with suppressed emotion.

‘Weel, Agnes, it’s no’ fair on the lads. If ye cannae mak’ up yer mind, wid it no’ be better tae tak’ anither job awa’ frae here?’

‘I’m fair worried tae daith about it a’.’ And she burst into tears.

‘Cheer up, lassie,’ said Spud kindly. ‘I’m sorry for ye, an’ I’m sorry for the lads tae. It’s the lack o’ weemin oot here that’s at the root o’ the bother. Hae ye no’ anither sister jist like yoursel?’

‘Oh ay,’ she answered, brightening up.

‘Mebbe ye wid save an awfu’ lot o’ bother if ye sent for her.’

‘I never thocht about that afore,’ she said, drying her eyes.

‘Has she a lad?’

‘No’ that I ken o’.’

‘If she came oot, dae ye think ye could mak’ up yer mind?’

‘Mebbe.’

‘Which is the lad?’

‘I’m no’ gaun tae tell ye.’

‘We’ll leave it at that; but if I write oot a cable, will ye agree tae send it?’

‘I micht dae that,’ was her swift reply.

Spud composed a cable, and asked her

to sign it, which she did—also paying for it.

‘Mebbe this’ll end the bother,’ Spud remarked, as he put the cable in his pocket.

‘Mebbe,’ was the vague response.

‘Agnes, ye fair bamboozle me.’

‘I’m bamboozled mysel’. I’m jist daft wi’ worry. I think I like them baith, but if I marry yin o’ the lads, the ither’ll need tae leave the hoose. It’ll no’ dae tae hae twa men here.’

‘That’s richt; but there’s plenty mair land; it’s easy tae get anither ferm in Canada.’

‘If ye can help there, we’ll no’ forget ye,’ said Agnes.

‘We’ll see, lassie,’ said Spud, rising and going out of the door. As he mounted his horse he added—‘My advice is tae say naething till yer sister comes oot; ye neednae tell the lads that she’s comin’.’

‘I’ll mind that; guid day, and thank ye,’ she replied in a tender way.

As Spud turned his horse to ride home, he heard her sobbing once again.

Spud met the two brothers on the road. Both were glum, suspicious of each other, and brooding hate.

‘Look here, you chaps; there’s got tae be a truce atween you. It’s no’ nice, the way you’re carryin’ on. If you’ll no’ be reasonable, mebbe that lassie’ll rin awa’ an’ dae something desperate. My advice is tae pit yer love an’ pride in yer pooch for a month. Efter that you’ll mebbe ken hoo the land lies.’

‘That is good advice,’ said Dugal.

‘We’ll be kind; we’ll be kind,’ said Donald.

‘That’s richt,’ shouted Spud, as he galloped off down the road.

But a month was too long for Dugal. Agnes, now more reserved, worried him; Donald was in the same plight. The once happy homestead was now a gloomy farm—so gloomy that one day Dugal, after writing a note, mounted his horse and rode away. Agnes found this letter on the table:

DEAR AGNES,—I can stand it no longer. You had better marry Donald, and I am willing that you and he shall have the farm. I am leaving to-day for ever.—Your broken-hearted

DUGAL.

Spud was sitting in his hut writing up his daily report when he heard the sound of galloping hoofs. Nearer they came; then

stopped. A minute later the door opened, and in rushed Agnes, with tears running down her cheeks, exclaiming, 'He's awa'! He's awa'!'

'Who?' said Spud sympathetically.

'Dugal! . . . My Dugal.'

'Steady, Agnes . . . steady. This is no' sae tragic as ye think. We'll find Dugal easy enough. . . . Has yer sister come yet?'

'She's comin' the day.'

'That's guid; I'll 'phone tae the station tae get her taken up tae the ferm. Donald'll be pleased tae wait on her till we find Dugal. . . . Here, lassie, take this cup o' tea; then we'll get efter Dugal.'

An hour later Spud and Agnes, well mounted, took to the road. Quickly they found the direction, but Dugal's horse had gone like the wind. For three days they rode across the sunlit prairie, but never a sign. . . .

At last they sighted a lonely horseman, whose horse seemed tired and the rider exhausted, for his head was buried in his breast.

'It's Dugal! . . . My Dugal!' And the girl galloped away.

Spud halted and watched from afar. Yes, it was Dugal. The sound of hoofs roused him from his reverie. He turned his head, and, on seeing Agnes, jumped from his horse. As she came up, he lifted her off the saddle and embraced her tenderly.

‘You’ve made up your mind noo?’ said Spud, an hour later.

‘Ay,’ said the blushing girl.

‘But whit about the ferm?’

‘Donald can have it,’ Dugal replied.

‘That’s kind of you,’ said Spud; ‘but don’t worry—here’s a wire for you aboot anither ferm.’ And he handed over the telegram, which read:

Shall be pleased to arrange for new homestead for Dugal Mackay.—COLONEL DENNIS.

‘Spud, you are chust fine,’ said Dugal with emotion.

‘Ay, you’re a man’s man,’ said Agnes, with tears of joy in her eyes.

Donald married the sister.

CHAPTER III.

MRS M'MUCKLE AND HER TEN BAIRNS.

CANADA owes much to the Riders of the Plains. 'Cook's son' and 'duke's son' have combined to cut the way for the homesteaders. Now that the work of fighting and pioneering is over, it is the honourable privilege of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to co-operate with Government and Canadian Pacific officials in guiding settlers to the Promised Land. Long is the roll of fame, and the roll grows longer. Spud Tamson quickly grasped that he was engaged in a glorious task.

In his red coat, and astride his charger, Spud revelled in the spirit of the plains. Riding the trails, viewing mile after mile of prairie lands, he soon developed a scorn for the mean streets of the past. Here was health, manhood, and freedom; here was hope for millions in the congested Old World. As he 'posted' mechanically in the saddle, rising then lowering his body in that graceful way which is the rule of

the Mounted Police, he thought of the Gallowgate, Govan, Garscube Road, Lyon Street, and all the other streets where lived adventurous gamins under such vastly different surroundings.

The reason for Spud's wondering about slum laddies was an experience some days before. While riding past a prairie farm he heard a young voice in a barn; the accent was 'Glesca.' So the mounted policeman rode up to the great wide door. Inside the barn a little chap was milking a Holstein cow. Now and again he shouted, 'Stand still, ye silly auld galoot; I'm no' gaun to kill ye.'

'Whaur dae ye come frae?' Spud inquired.

'Glesca,' was the prompt reply of the little fellow, much amazed at hearing his own tongue.

'What did you dae in Glesca?'

'I used to sell the *Times*, *News*, an' *Ceetizen* at "The Central".'

'An' dae ye like this job?'

'You bet. Plenty o' fresh air an' lots o' guid chuck. We get sweet mulk tae—nane o' yer soor dook or skimmed waater that we used tae buy in Paurlimentary Road.'

'Jings! You're a corker,' exclaimed Spud.

'Na, I'm a fermer!' protested the boy, laughing.

'Wha sent you here?'

'Doctor Cossar.'

'Could we get ony mair laddies tae come?'

'Ay, thoosan's—if they got the chance.'

That afternoon Spud was on duty at the C.P.R. station. Colonist trains were running through. One of these trains was shunted on to a siding to let the Trans-Canada express go past. Over five hundred colonists were on board; all gave a mighty cheer as the smiling trooper galloped up to the siding.

'Jings! It's Spud Tamson.'

'Ay! I ken him by his red hair.'

'He's an awfu' toff.'

'Ay! Richt swanky.'

These were the remarks as Spud dismounted and mixed with the colonists, who were now gathering in groups on the open prairie. 'A fine lot o' folk,' mused Spud, as he walked amongst them. Like a good mounted policeman, he cheered the more anxious of the band, and, as policemen

always do out West, he helped the mothers with their loads. One woman particularly impressed him. She was a strapping body, kept a cheerful face, despite the fact that she was surrounded by ten steerin' bairns. Motherhood makes for serenity and nobility; the mother of a large flock is generally an optimist. Sitting there on the prairie was a fine advertisement for dear auld Scotland. Real Glasgow, too. She stirred Spud's emotions, also the emotions of those near, while crooning to her bairn this old-time song:

O, wha is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
O, I wonder whase bairnie this bairnie can be?

This bonnie wee mousie,

This wee cheetie pussie—

O, it's my ain wee bairnie that's kissin' at me.

O, wha is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
O, I wonder whase bairnie this bairnie can be?

This bonnie wee lammie,

Sae fond o' its mammie—

O, it's just my ain bairnie that's fond, fond o' me.

Spud stepped forward to see the bairn, apparently unwilling to sleep.

'Are you willin'?' inquired Mrs M'Muckle, the mother of ten. She had the baby's feeding-bottle in her hand.

‘Ay, willin’,’ replied Spud.

‘Could ye get me a wee drap o’ milk for the wean? It’s no’ very weel th’ day; it’s teethin’ the noo.’

‘I’ll dae that,’ said the obliging policeman, taking the bottle. In a few minutes he returned with the milk required, which soothed the restless bairn.

‘That’s awfu’ guid o’ ye. You’re jist like my man. He’s in Vancouver noo; awfu’ weel up on the railway. I think he’s a heid-yin in the Percel Offis. We’re gaun oot tae jine him. He tells me he’s got a hoose wi’ a main door an’ a bell. A bell! Jist fancy! Me that’s been livin’ “three up” a’ my days. I’m fair tired o’ tenements. Aye fechtin’ aboot washin’ the stair an’ stookeyin’ the close. Mind ye, it widnae be sae bad if a body could get the turn o’ the washin’-hoose key. But afore I left I wanted tae rinse oot wee Wullie’s semmit an’ Jeanie’s peenie. Mrs M’Gonigal—her that’s aye at the pawn—widnae gie it up. Says she, “I shoved it doon wee Jimmy’s back to stop his nose frae bleedin’, an’ noo I cannae get it at a’. Mebbe it’s doon the jawbox,” an’ she banged the door on ma nose. The cheek o’ her! There’s been nae livin’ wi’ her since her man got

promoted tae carryin' the keys o' M'Luckie's Egg and Ham Buzaur.'

'Mebbe you'll hae your ain washin'-hoose in Vancouver,' suggested Spud.

'Oh, ay! Twa set-in tubs, tae! Wi' the waater on! My man tells me the hoose has five rooms, h. and c., an' nae midden at the back door. We'll be rale toffs when we get tae Vancouver. It's aboot time! I've worked gey hard, I'm tellin' ye; keepin' a hoose on twenty-five shillin's a week has been nae joke. An' I've had ten weans. No' that I dislike the bairns, but a big family keeps ye doon. Mind ye, I'm no' yin o' thae that spends a' the money on fish suppers an' Charlie Chaplin. But I wid like tae see the world afore I get shauchly i' the legs.'

'Whit boat did ye come wi'?'

'The *Marburn*; a guid boat for families. The purser wis awfu' nice tae the weans; he used tae gie oor yins strippet ba's an' conversassioneey lozenges. We had a grand run; the big laddie spent his time tryin' tae fish for haddies, but he only catcht a "deid marine."'

'Is this your first trip ower the waater?'

'Ay. Of coorse, I've been tae Rothesay;

wan year I went tae 'Tartantinny wi' the "Co-op." I like the neb o' the boat best; ye aye get the first o' the fresh air. I cannae stan' the blunt end o' the boat at a'—it's aye jooglin' aboot, like a lassie waitin' at the Post Offis for her lad—an' oor Wullie's jist a fair deevil for keekin' ower the rim tae see the screws cuttin' lumps aff the ocean. . . . I never get seeck on the boats. Ye see, my faither wis captain o' the *Clutha*. Mebbe you'll no' mind the *Clutha*; it was an' awfu' fast boat that ferried the folk ower tae Govan. It used tae cut the waater like a grocer cuttin' cheese. He wis the smertest skipper on the Clyde; I've seen him jookin' a dredger an' the *Ivanhoe* in wan braith. It wis me that used tae punch the tickets in the Fair Holidays. Donald MacMurchie wis the chief engineer—him that drapped deid in a waash-hoose in Port-Dundas.'

'I can see you've had a wide experience,' said Spud; 'it's a wonder ye didnae take a job as a stewardess in your young days.'

'I never got the chance. I wis married afore I had time tae get my horns oot. Mind ye, though I'm sayin' it mysel', I wis as bonnie a lass as ever wore a bustle in Argyle Street. Of coorse, you'll no' mind

o' the bustles; but lang ago we used to mak' the bustles oot o' auld copies o' *The Glesca Herald*. . . . I had guid chances tae. There wis Erchie Cuhoon—him that keeps a pie-shop in Auchenauchen. He waanted me, an' spoke tae my faither aboot the ring; but I wisnae sure o' him. He wisnae bad-lookin'; but there wis consumption in his family—a' the Cuhoons are a bit chisty. When we used tae hae oor Spring Holidays in the caur tae Kumlachie, he wis spittin' a' the time. He wis gey angry when I sent back his presents—a bangle, a mangle, an' three combs. But I wanted Duncan—him that I'm married tae. Duncan wis a smert, pushin' chap—awfu' guid at the dancin', an' jist a fair corker at 'The Flooers o' Edinburgh' an' the quadrilles. He won a tea-caddie an' a biscuit-barrel at Gourrock for the best waltzer in the Fair Fortnicht. He wis a lucky yin tae: it wis him that got a hunner pounds in the first fitba' compiteetion. I'm tellin' ye, he fair carried me aff my feet. Afore I kent where I wis, I wis married an' settled doon.'

'It has done ye nae herm,' said Spud, laughing.

'Mebbe no'; but I've had my troubles, I'm tellin' ye. Whit wi' measles, croup, an'

brunkitis, the weans have kept me aye runnin' for hot plates an' castor-ile.'

'But are ye no' in a benefit society?'

'Oh, ay; a' oor folk were brocht up in the Rechabites, an' my guidfaither peys threepence a week tae the Shepherds, the Buffaloes, an' the Number-Nine Lodge. I'm weel in wi' the societies; I wis Vice-Templar o' the Vinegar Hill I.O.G.T.'

'So you're Tee Tee?'

'I have tae be. Ye see, I need tae keep a grup o' my man. A' his folk are guid at the bottle. Duncan gets fair daft efter a couple o' haufs. He dropped his false teeth ower the side o' the *Fairy Queen* when the Vinegar Hill Lodge wis haein' a jaunt on the Port-Dundas Canal. Fair affronted me! But whit frichtened me wis the time he stopped the London express. It wis at Hogmanay, an' he wis wi' a cheery lot o' freens. When they were a' fu', yin o' them laid a bet o' a box o' haddies that they couldnae stop the London train. Oor Duncan took up the challenge. They a' went doon tae Eglinton Street an' got on tae the line. When the train wis heard thunderin' alang, Duncan stepped atween the rails an' started tae wave a red muffler. The driver put

on the brakes, an' nearly telescoped the carriages.

'“Whit's up?” asked the driver, on gettin' aff his engine.

'“The train's stopped,” said Duncan.

'“But whit did ye stop it for?”

'“A box o' haddies,” Duncan said.

'“It's a box in the polis-offis you'll get,” an' the driver started tae blaw his whustle. The polis took Duncan tae the Central. He got thirty days, an' the news was in a' the papers. I wis fair affronted, an' a' the neebors were laughin'. So, when he came oot, I telt him he wid need tae hand ower his pey on Seterdays. I used tae gie him back a shillin' for twa bottles o' table beer.'

'He's daein' weel enough noo, by whit you're tellin' me,' Spud suggested.

'Oh, ay. He's a guid man, tae. I've never kent him look sideways at anither lass since we got married.'

'I think I ken him; wis he on the Caley?'

'Ay.'

'A big man wi' red hair?'

'No; he's a wee man, but awfu' smert—dark, fresh in the face. Mebbe you'll mind he had a wee pimple on the pint o' his chin, an' he lost his wee finger shuttin' a door.'

'I ken wha ye mean noo; it wis him that won a first prize at Hamilton for cock canaries.'

'The very same! He's awfu' fond o' birds. We used tae keep doos an' canaries afore the price o' seed went up. He got three firsts at the Cumbernauld Doo Show for fast pigeons. Dae ye no' mind his great bird—"The Scotch Express"—winnin' the race atween Auchenauchen an' Mulguy?'

'I mind o' that fine—saw his photy in the *Doo Daily* an' the *Kumlachie Gazeteer*.'

'That's richt! It wis that race that got him his job in Vancouver. Yin o' the heid-yins oot there is fair daft on doos. Duncan selt him "The Scotch Express," and, efter that, he got a lift into the persel-offis in Vancouver.'

'Jings! He's gettin' on,' mused Spud.

'Ay; he wis tellin' me he's a sort o' high heid-yin noo—ten men under him, an' he carries the keys. I kent he wid get on. Duncan's a rale gentleman; he never blaws his tea, or saucers it—jist wafts it wi' his bonnet. . . . Oh my! I'll need tae run; the train's gettin' ready for the road. . . . See ye again;' and she dashed off with all her bairns at her heels.

'Cheerio,' said Spud, mounting his horse and waving all good-bye as he galloped away.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COOK THAT WAS JILTED.

I am the land that listens; I am the land that
broods,
Steeped in eternal beauty, crystalline water and
woods;
I wait for the man who will win me, and I will
not be won in a day,
And I will not be won by weaklings, subtle, suave,
and mild,
But by men with the heart of Vikings, and the
simple faith of a child.

SERVICE.

THIS is the anthem of prairie trooper
and prairie pioneer, and was the song
in the heart of Colonel Dennis as he motored
through the smiling Valley of the Plains.
The gray and handsome old warrior lay
back at ease, viewing with eyes, shrewd
yet benevolent, the work of many pioneers.
Some forty years ago he had ridden this
way in a red coat and armed against the
rebellious half-breeds led by Louis Riel.
Knee to knee he had charged; with his
sabre he helped to end the chapter of dis-
order and open the chapter of colonisation.

He had lived not for gold or glory, but for the prairie folks and the prairie lands. Just as the Highland hills will quicken the heart of a Scot, so the rolling prairies affected Colonel Dennis, the Father of the Plains.

Once a year he 'beat this trail,' and his mission was to double the harvests, and so double the joys of life; for all social advancement out West largely depends upon the material rewards of honest toil.

While the colonel seemed at ease and enjoying the wonderful air, his brain was busy. Indeed, he was thinking out a hundred things—tree-planting, improved barns, community halls, &c. Captain Edwards, his A.D.C., like a well-trained aide, was in communion with the mood of his chief, but a quick-moving speck on the horizon caused Edwards to stir. A man on a horse . . . nearer he came. . . . Stetson hat . . . red coat, &c.

'A policeman, sir,' said Edwards.

'Ah,' said the colonel, waking up; 'just the man I want to see.'

The car stopped as the policeman came near.

Spud, recognising a familiar figure, pulled his horse up sharply, and, saluting smartly, said, 'Good-morning, sir.'

‘Good-morning, trooper; how are things round here?’

‘Very quiet, sir.’

‘Not much trouble nowadays?’

‘No, sir.’

‘Are the new Scots homesteaders settling down?’

‘No’ bad, sir; but——’

‘What?’ interjected the colonel.

‘If you could plant as many nice lassies as you’re plantin’ trees, the prairie wid be as cheery as Rouken Glen and Rothesay.’

‘Is the demand great?’ inquired the colonel.

‘Very! We’ve had five school-teachers in twelve months.’

‘Why?’

‘As soon as they land they’re married. The farmers’ wives, tae, are in need o’ a hand wi’ the bairns an’ the hoose. I wis tae tell ye, sir, to send oot a train-load o’ lassies.’

‘That is a tall order, and can’t be done; but what’s the minimum?’

‘Weel, sir, we need a hunner here; but if ye can send twenty, your name’ll be handed doon as “The Father o’ the Plains.”’

‘Edwards,’ said the colonel, turning to

his A.D.C., 'send a cable to Major Moore stating, "Situations available for twenty Scots girls in Buffalo Horn Valley."—Will that please you, trooper?' he said, turning again to Spud.

'Fine, sir! The joy-bells'll ring the night.'

'I hope we shall be successful.—Good-day, trooper.'

'Good-day, sir,' and Spud saluted as the car shot on its way.

Colonel Dennis tumbled back into his day-dreams again, thinking—thinking—of the people of the plains.

A month later there was much excitement in the little township which supplied the Valley. The cause was this telegram:

DETACHMENT,

BUFFALO HORN VALLEY.

Twenty Scots girls arriving by Trans-Canada. Please see their employers have conveyances to meet them. Render every assistance possible.

MAJOR WOLSLEY, Fort Reginald.

The stir proved the civilising effect of the opposite sex. In the rough old days—the days of sod shacks, canned beef, and bad beer—the prairies were only for bachelors of

the Lost Legion. The women have changed that, and the work goes on. When a new girl arrives in the prairie township, the lonely men rush to the barber for a shampoo and a shave. There is something sad in all this tomfoolery—the sadness of men who hunger for love—while in Britain we have thousands of surplus women—and splendid women too!

The girls arrived all right—and all smiling, but a little overawed at the flags, the streamers, the cheering crowd, and the scratch band playing a welcome. That is how they appreciate the Scots in Canada. Of course, it is a noisy affair; nevertheless, it is sincere. The bosses of the township arranged several social functions, and at night there was a dance. When the interval arrived, Spud escorted a lonely-looking lassie to the hearty meal provided for the guests. As they went into the dining-room, he manfully endeavoured to cheer the lassie up, without result.

Supper was placed before the apparently homesick girl, but what she really wanted was friendship and consolation. Obviously she was seeking relief from pent-up emotions, and Spud's manner invited 'a crack.'

‘I wish I wis as happy as you,’ she remarked, as she toied with her meal.

‘Whit’s up?’ he asked kindly.

‘I’ve been jilted—for the third time tae,’ and she gave a sigh.

‘I’m sorry to hear that,’ said Spud, proceeding with his meal. . . . ‘Wis he a Glesca man?’

‘No; he comes from Glenmacfu; he’s in “The Force.”’

‘A polisman?’

‘Ay.’

‘Hoo did ye fa’ in wi’ him?’

‘I wis a cook in Dividend Avenue, aff the West End Park. He wis a recruit, an’ gey thin when he came aff the hills. I used tae be up a’ nicht bakin’ soda scones, jam tarts, an’ steak pies for him. When I got him first he wis ten stane; noo he’s fourteen, an’ can hardly buckle his belt on. I liked him awfu’ weel—at first. He didna ken much about the lassies—at least, that’s whit he telt me.’

‘But did ye no’ ken the polis are weel in wi’ a’ the cooks?’

‘Oh ay, but I thocht he wis different. He looked simple, an’ he was a member o’ the Wee Frees,’ and she sighed heavily again, at the same time pushing away the mince.

‘Mind ye,’ she went on, ‘I’m no’ blamin’ Donald; it was the limmer at No. 10—Flora MacTummel, a red-heided yin; no’ bad lookin’, but awfu’ pushin’. When she came doon frae Daftnocool she had the heather amang her taes, but she kent her wey aboot for a’ that, an’ telt her freens that she wis after a cashier, a grocer, or a heid-yin in “The Force.” She’s been the cause o’ mair jiltin’ in Dividend Avenue than ony ither servant in the place. As soon as anither cook or tablemaid got a lad, she wis oot at the door tryin’ tae hook him awa’.’

‘Wis she no’ content wi’ yin?’ Spud inquired, as he piled the cups on a tray.

‘Na; she wis fair daft for men. Her kitchen wis like a Hielan’ gatherin’. They tell me that a’ the Hielan’men in Glesca were writin’ poetry aboot her red hair; I’ve seen verses in the *Evening Times* aboot her.’

‘Jings! she must hae been weel up in the love business.’

‘Mebbe she wis, but she kens you men are gey fond o’ your meat. She could cook; I’ll say that for her. She could fry steak, ingins, Lorne sausage, an’ black puddin’s better than ony cook in Glesca. An’ she had the Gaelic,’ said the dejected one, in a despairing tone.

‘Is that the key o’ the business?’

‘Ay,’ and she nodded her head sadly.

‘But did ye no’ try tae learn it? I kent a chap—Erichie M’Kenzie wis his name—that got a job in “The Hielan’man’s Arms” at Jamaica Street by learnin’ up “slancheva,” “cumarashin - choo,” an’ “cumareecumara-shinvoyu.” He used tae sling that aff his chest as he had been born in Auchenhaggis or Tobermory.’

‘I tried it. . . . I tried it. . . . I even tried tae sing “The Young Chevalier” at the annual conversassioneey o’ The Clan MacDhu, but I broke doon in the first verse.’

‘Whit went wrang?’

‘I saw the red-heided yin (Flora MacTummel) laughin’, an’ Donald had his hand ower his mooth.’

‘That wis a peety.’

‘Ay, ay,’ she mused, in a melancholy way. ‘It wis that nicht he broke awa’ frae me.’

‘Oh!’

‘He didnae gie me the first dance; an’, mind ye, he promised it. When he left me the nicht before wi’ his pooches fu’ o’ soda scones an’ jam terts, he said, “Noo, Bella, she’ll gif me the first an’ the last dance—sure.” . . . That wis a promise, wis it no’?’

‘Ay.’

‘Mind ye, I’m no’ blamin’ Donald,’ she explained. ‘When the M.C. gi’ed the nod tae the band, up jumped Flora an’ hooked Donald by the airm. I wis half-roads ower the hall by this time; a’ the folk kent we had been walkin’ oot, an’ you’ll ken yoursel’ it’s usual tae get the first dance onywey. Nae wonder I went red i’ the face an’ thocht the flair wis comin’ up tae hit me on the broo.’

‘Did ye gang hame?’

‘I’m no’ made like that. If Flora can cook, I can dance. I jist gripped the M.C. (wee MacCorkindale) roon’ the neck, an’ we floated roon’ the ballroom like a couple o’ feathers in the wind. Flora put up her heid an’ tried tae be awfu’ superior on the flair, but her feet widnae let her; so she drapped her heid again an’ jist birlled aboot, like a lost orange in the waater.’

‘Puir Donald!’ she continued after a pause. ‘He wis sweatin’ like a porter at the Central i’ the Fair Holidays. . . . A’ the lads rushed my programme.’

‘Did Donald?’

‘No,’ and she sighed again. ‘But I kept the last yin free, thinkin’ he micht come

an' ask me. He cam' richt enough, an' I wis ready an' happy tae dance wi' him tae; but, as he wis walkin' ower tae me, Flora cut in atween us an' stopped him. 'There wis an awfu' argy-bargy in Gaelic; they chewed the tartan for aboot ten meenits. A' the time, I wis up on my feet waitin for him. So I asked Rona M'Donald whit a' the talk wis aboot. She telt me that Flora wis sayin' he promised her the last dance the nicht afore. Says I, "He wis wi' me last nicht." Says she, "He wis wi' Flora tae."

'Did ye wait for him?' asked Spud.

'No; I jist flung up my heid an' left the room; but when I wis through the door I keeked back; her an' Donald were hoochin' awa' like a couple o' Zulus gaun tae war.'

'It strikes me Donald wisnae as green as he wis cabbage-lookin',' suggested Spud.

'Mebbe no'; but I'm no' blamin' him,' and again she sighed.

'But he must hae been gaun tae Flora's kitchen efter he left yours.'

'Ay. . . . That's the rub. . . . That's the rub,' and again she sighed.

'That's the privilege o' a polisman,' Spud reminded her.

‘I ken, I ken,’ she mused, in an abstracted way.

‘Love’s a queer business.’

‘Men, ye mean,’ was her swift reply.

‘Hielan’men,’ corrected Spud.

‘I could hae backed Donald as a model o’ perfection; he had such a nice, simple face, an’ his voice wis saft an’ low; he had the ways o’ a gentleman. He telt me he had never kissed a lassie afore.’

‘Did ye believe him?’

‘Ay,’ was the firm response.

‘But he’ll be marryin’ Flora, is he no’?’

‘No.’

‘Oh!’

‘Ay,’ and she smiled broadly.

‘Who is he marryin’?’

‘A tablemaid.’

‘Hielan’—like himsel’?’

‘No—a Fifer; a rale smert yin.’

‘Jings! that’s a surprise——’

‘Tae Donald,’ interjected the lady.

‘Whit wey?’

‘She (the Fifer) heard that Donald had been walkin’ me oot on Thursdays, Flora on Saturdays, an’ he wis walkin’ her oot on Sundays. When she heard that Donald wis gaun tae get the ring for Flora she wired for her faither. When he arrived she

showed him a hundred letters an' ten stamp photos o' her an' Donald thegither. Yin o' the letters ran :

MY DEAR MAGGIE,—You are chust the finest wooman oot o' the Lowlands. I wass coontin' the days till she got a hoose in Mulguy. It will be chust fine when we settle doon. I'll be up in the morn for the terts an' soda scones; I could take a haggis too.—Your lovin' DONALD.

'Complications,' said Spud.

'Ay,' was the jubilant reply.

'Whit happened?'

'She an' her faither met Donald waitin' for Flora at Jamaica Brig. Her faither is a big man wi' a lot o' inflooeence wi' the heid-yins o' the Force. Donald hummed an' hawed a bit, but when the faither started tae talk aboot the superintendent he broke doon an' marched tae Argyle Street tae buy the ring for Maggie; so Flora didnae get him efter a',' said the lady, with a malicious grin.

'But whit did Flora say aboot it?'

'She got engaged the same nicht tae Ronnie MacMurchie, the man wha used tae write poetry aboot her red hair in the *Evening Times*.'

'An' whit aboot you?'

‘I’m on the shelf. . . . A man-hater noo.’

‘There’s nae “shelf” in Canada; but whaur are ye gaun the noo?’

‘I’m engaged as a cook tae the MacMurchies.’

‘That’s near Jock Barber,’ Spud mused aloud.

‘Wha is he?’

‘A rale dacent man.’

‘Oh!’

The *Prairie Times* (a month later):

‘Mr John Barber, homesteader, from Kildrummie, was married to Miss Maggie Brown at the Presbyterian Manse last week. The couple went off for their honeymoon in a brand new Ford, decorated with ancient boots and rubber galoshes.’

CHAPTER V.

THE WEE MAN FRAE PAISLEY.

NO matter what certain misinformed newspapers said about Canada, Spud was convinced that it was a land of opportunity. As a policeman, he knew that much of the ink spilled on harvesters and their woes was inspired by apostles of 'Ca' Canny,' who had a bee in their bonnet about emigration. More cunning brains mailed this dope home, with the plain intention of blocking British emigration. All the time, other nationalities were pouring in. Where certain unfortunate Britishers were said to be starving, thousands of foreigners were finding the change a heaven, as compared with the congested condition of the Old World.

Well, Spud knew that there was no unemployment on the farms of Canada. As for the cities, it was true the misfits failed, but the men of grit won through. One and a half million Scots were in Canada. The roll contained the names of peers, baronets, and millionaires. Spud concluded

that the wily individuals who were engaged cursing Canada and blocking emigration were inspired with a well-concealed dislike of the Mother Country; if these men won, then the painter would be cut, and the flag would fall. But not so long as North-West Mounted Police rode the trails or the C.P.R. controlled the rails. These were solid institutions, conceived by Britishers and good Canadians. British pluck and capital had taken a sporting chance in this imperial business. What we have we hold! Come the four worlds in arms—or with pens—and we shall withstand them. The British Empire is set in cement.

Spud mused in this way while cleaning up his saddlery at the Detachment door. Though a gamin, he could riddle wheat from chaff. Around him was the evidence—the Mackenzies, who were small crofters in Arran, and now owners of two large farms; Colin Campbell, who was a draughtsman in Fairfield, and now a merchant and boss man of the town. Alex. Campbell (his brother), who was a joiner in Govan, had emigrated at sixty years of age and opened a baker's shop; in ten years he had made a small fortune. Germans, once peasants, were now lords of the manor. Dutchmen, formerly

farm servants, were riding the trails in luxurious motor-cars. The two Whites, university men from M'Gill, who were laughed at when they came, had the biggest, the best, and most comfortable farm in the district. And in town was a band of all nationalities who had made good.

Spud was 'fed up' with all this grouching about Canada. And he was sorry, very sorry, to think that the men who grouched most were those who preferred the 'dole' at home. Canada was a land for the worker and the smiler. Adaptability was the rule. If a man would only fit in, try something, do anything till the main chance came, then Canada would reward him for his faith and toil. It is a fact that one of the High Commissioners for Canada once trailed the Western Prairies selling humble packets of tea.

'You're busy,' said a dapper wee man who jumped out of a rusty old Ford car. He was an unusual figure for the prairie. The wee man wore a big bowler hat, an imitation rose in his button-hole, yellow tie, check tweeds of the draught-board variety, and an air of inquisitive forcefulness, which was heightened by a short squat nose and two piercing dark eyes.

‘We’re aye busy in “The Mounted,”’ Spud replied, glad nonetheless of a break in the conventional routine. He was polishing up the brass work on his saddle for the annual inspection. ‘Are you a new chum out here?’ he added, always eager to know ‘who’s who.’

‘Ay.’

‘You don’t look like a fermer.’

‘I’m a salesman,’ was the reply of the wee man in the big bowler hat, as he puffed out his chest like the president of a 10,000,000 dollar corporation.

‘Whit’s your line?’

‘I’ve got agencies for M’Kechnie’s Gum-bile Cure, M’Conochie’s Lumbago Lini-ment, M’Indoo’s Hair Ile, an’ Missus Och-terlonie’s Face Creams an’ Hair Pooders. Here’s a sample o’ M’Indoo’s Hair Ile,’ and he handed over a miniature bottle with an illustration of Wullie M’Indoo, the proud inventor—a Paisley man—who was shown with a bald head. Underneath was the word ‘Before.’ The second illustration showed Wullie M’Indoo with a mop of hair something like a Fijian’s. This illustration was entitled, ‘After two bottles of M’Indoo’s Hair Oil.’

‘Thanks,’ said Spud. Then, after exam-

ining the illustrations, he remarked: 'Dae ye think you'll mak' a leevin' in the West at this game?'

'Easy,' was the confident reply.

'I'm no' sae shair aboot that. It's machinery, horses, an' farmers that's needed here—no' cures for gumbiles, bald heids, an' lumbago.'

'I could sell onything frae a three-legged horse tae a coo wi' wan tit, or a hen that only laid twa eggs a year,' replied the wee man. 'Besides, I've proved in Paisley that there's a fortune in patent medicines; folks are fair daft on hair cures an' ointments. It's the daft men that mak' money.'

'Oh!'

'Ay,' said the wee man, sticking his thumbs underneath his waistcoat, and cocking his head like a bantam's. 'It wis me that selt twenty-thousan' pots o' face-cream tae the mill lassies in Paisley. When I walked intae Paisley from Ibrox, I had only tuppence in my pooch. I had tae get money or work. So I went tae a tailor, an' said: "I've nae money, an' I need a guid suit o' claes; if you'll fix me up, I'll pey ye back in a week." He looked at me, saw I wis a man o' my word, an' made the suit. Then I went tae Missus Ochterlonie. Says

I, "You're only sellin' five hundred pots o' face-cream in a week. Gie me the job, an' I'll sell twenty thousan'." "Richt you are," says she. So I started. I got a barrow loaded up wi' the stuff. In the middle o' the barrow wis a notice:

10,000 PAISLEY LASSIES
ARE

'ON THE SHELF'

Because Their Faces
Are a' Wrinkles

ONE POT O' OCHTERLONIE'S
FACE CREAM

WILL SECURE A MAN

6d. a pot.

MONEY RETURNED
IF UNSUCCESSFUL

BUY NOW

'What happened?' inquired Spud.

'They rushed the barrow. I wis selt oot in hauf-an-hoor, an' Missus Ochterlonie had tae telegraph tae London for a couple o' trucks o' lard an' a barrel o' odey Colon. That's what the stuff's made wi'. On pey-days, we had ten barrows at the mill gates, an' the

polis had tae regulate the traffic. We took on a couple o' side lines—face mirrors an' pooder puffs—so that we had a' the lassies in Paisley rubbin' their faces an' dabbin' their noses. I've seen them in the streets sae interested in lookin' at their faces in the wee mirrors that they walked into lamp-posts an' tramway caurs. Business wis sae brisk that the Toon Coouncil made a protest in the Paisley paper about lassies neglectin' "Safety First," an' dartin' against the tramway caurs. A' the same, it wis a guid thing for the lassies. Bachelors frae Barrheid, Neilston, Johnstone, Renfrew, an' Cardonald invaded Paisley on Saturday efternoons, an' I wis hearin' that Woolworth's were sellin' weddin' rings at the rate o' five hunner a-week. That shows ye the power o' advertising, the value o' guid salesmanship, an' the merit o' Missus Ochterlonie's face-cream.'

'Jings! You're a smert yin,' was Spud's comment. Then he inquired about M'Conochie's lumbago cure.

'That wisnae easy tae sell. Auld folks are lang in the heid, but we opened a consultin'-room, an' shoved a bill in the windae:

LUMBAGO MEANS PAIN
McCONOCHIE'S CURE
MEANS NO PAIN

Come in for a **rub**
FIVE RUBS **FREE**

Bottles, 1/-, 2/6, 5/-
MONEY BACK IF NOT SATISFIED
COME NOW

‘Did they come?’

‘Like hens efter grossets,’ was the prompt reply. ‘I had ten men rubbin’ their backs, from eight in the mornin’ till nine at night. Mind ye, the stuff’s guid. A’ the same, it’s the rubbin’ that works the cure; but they’ll no’ rub themsel’s unless you kid them on wi’ the liniment. Doctors’ll tell ye that. The great thing is gettin’ the testimony o’ a satisfied customer. We got a letter frae Jimmy Diddle tae the effect that

“‘Fur fifty years I’ve been in pain—aye fearin’, thinkin’ often aboot daith, sometimes o’ suicide. But efter twa bottles o’ M’Conochie’s liniment, I was able tae walk tae Cardonald. I’m well satisfied.”’

‘No’ bad,’ mused Spud.

‘We published that in the Paisley paper, an’ we were selt oot the first Saturday.’

‘But, if ye can sell stuff like that in Paisley, whit wey are ye trailin’ aboot Canada?’ demanded Spud.

‘I had a row wi’ M’Indoo. He’s got nae experience o’ the trade. When he seen the effect o’ the sales o’ M’Conochie’s Cure an’ Missus Ochterlonie’s Face Cream, he wanted me tae open a consultin’-room for his hair ile. But I wis against it. It’s like this: some men are born bald, an’ a’ the hair lotions in the world’ll no’ grow hair. But M’Indoo’s a stubborn man. Says he, “If ye’ll no’ boost my stuff, I’ll cut off the agency.” Says I, “I never lose a customer if I can; if ye want me tae boom it, I’ll dae it, but you take the consequences.” Says he, “I’m no’ feart!” An’ so we started. We opened anither consultin’-room, an’ had twenty sandwichmen on the road—a’ bald-heided. This was M’Indoo’s idea, no’ mine. On the boards wis:

WE'RE FED UP WI' BEING BALD,
FED UP WI' FEELIN' CAULD.
WE'RE RUBBING OOR HEIDS
WI' McINDOO'S HAIR ILE.

WATCH IT GROW

WATCH IT GROW

WATCH IT GROW

Bottles, 2/6 and 5/-

BUY———NOW

‘An’ did it grow?’ Spud inquired.

‘No,’ said the wee man. ‘There’s no’ a man born can mak’ hair grow on the heid o’ sandwichmen. There’s no’ enough nourishment in their bodies; besides, they were auld, dune men. Auld men are expected tae be bald. But M‘Indoo wis sae fu’ o’ conceit that he wis determined tae *mak’* it grow. I kent fine what would happen. The Paisley folk aye want to see “the goods,” so they sat ticht, an’ kept back their orders. A’ the mill lassies started tae sing:

‘Like M‘Indoo, Mac M‘Indoo,
We’ll see it grow, see it grow.
Ay! we’ll see it grow.’

‘This is awfu’ interestin’,’ Spud interjected.
‘But no’ for M‘Indoo. He kept the men

walkin' about for three weeks, till they got catarrh an' influenza; then he sacked the lot in fair disgust. He blamed me, an' tried tae hit me wi' a hammer, but I louped ower the counter an' locked him in the shop till his temper got better. Then he agreed that his cure wis for folk wi' dandruff, dry hair or thin hair, an' no' auld, dune men wi' heids as smooth as billiard ba's. Meantime, my guid-brother, wha keeps a barber's shop in Saskatchewan, had invited me out here. He says I can make a fortune. So I'm haein' a shot at it.'

'But you're forgettin' about the Canadians an' Americans,' Spud reminded him. 'They can sell onything, frae cuhootchy joojoobs tae celluloid teeth an' collapsible motor-caurs.'

'I'm no feart,' declared the wee man. 'The world's fu' o' folk wi' bald heids, pimples on their faces, an' pains in their legs. As lang as weemin seek beauty an' matrimony, I'll be able tae get a leevin' wi' M'Kechnie's Gumbile Cure, M'Conochie's Lumbago Liniment, M'Indoo's Hair Ile, and Missus Ochterlonie's Face Creams an' Hair Pooders.'

'You'll get on in Canada,' said Spud, laughing.

‘Ay! I’ll get on. If I cannae sell hair ile an’ ointments, I can sell hot-dogs (sausages), pea-nuts, an’ motor-caurs. This country’s fair stinkin’ wi’ money.’

‘You’re “the goods.”’

‘Ay, an’ I’ll deliver “the goods,”’ said the wee man, jumping into his rusty old car and scooting off.

The wee man from Paisley has now a big store out West.

CHAPTER VI.

DIDDLING MEN FROM ARRAN AND ABERDEEN.

HOMESTEADERS are simple folk, and generally regarded as 'guid game' by implement agents, quack vendors and horse-doctors. The greatest artist in Saskatchewan was an American-Irishman named Paddy O'Toole. Paddy was a dealer in live stock; for many years he had made an excellent living out of American 'hayseeds,' as the American farmers are called. Success tempted him into Buffalo Horn Valley, a district settled mainly by Scots. Whether Paddy was aware of the unwritten law that it is an offence to diddle a Scotsman or a Jew is not known, but he accomplished it—to the annoyance of his dupes. Hence the wires to M.P.'s in Ottawa to the effect that cattle frauds were rampant, and the urgent demand for instant action. The result was instructions to Spud Tamson to inquire into the trouble. One morning he set out on the trail.

'It's time you were here,' said Rab Mac-

kenzie, a tousy-headed, good-natured crofter from the island of Arran, who was a most successful farmer, holding six hundred and forty acres of his own.

‘Whit’s wrang?’ inquired Spud, dismounting from his horse.

‘Man! I’ve been diddled oot o’ a hundred dollars.’

‘It takes a clever man tae diddle you,’ Spud muttered, as he pulled out his notebook.

‘Ay; but it’s been done. Look at that coo!’ exclaimed Mackenzie, pointing to an unhappy-looking animal leaning against a post for rest and scratching. ‘That coo cost me a hundred dollars. It’s about fifteen year auld, blin’ in three tits, got consumption, and cannae see oot o’ the richt e’e.’

‘Ach! It’s your ain faut,’ said Spud; ‘d’ye ken a coo when you see it?’

‘Ay!’ roared Rab; ‘but that’s a walking catalogue o’ colic, consumption, an’ the mange.’

‘Were ye fu’ when ye bocht it?’

‘Na! Of course, I had a hauf, but my heid wis a’ richt.’

‘There cannae be much in yer heid tae buy that,’ was Spud’s observation.

‘Mebbe no’! But,’ protested Rab, ‘if ye kent O’Toole you wid understand. He wis sae ceevil an’ sae polished. A clever yin, I’m tellin’ ye! Man! he made me feel he wis daein’ me a favour, instead o’ me favourin’ him. He telt me that that coo wis oot o’ Dunlop’s strain o’ Ayrshires. Here’s the certificate he passed tae me:

‘Daisy Bell, aged seven, good cow for stud purposes. Out of Dimple Dockin and Nancy June (Dunlop’s strain), prize-winners Ayr, Dunrobin, and Chicago. Guaranteed correct.’

‘An’ did ye no’ ken she wis blin’ in three tits?’ inquired Spud.

‘The coo wis dry when I bocht her,’ was the reply. ‘He said he had tae milk her efter the lang journey in the train.’

‘Ye must hae been fu’, Mackenzie,’ was Spud’s judgment.

‘I wisnae fu’, I’m tellin’ ye! I wis fair mismerised. Yon man could sell a buffalo for a Clydesdale, an’ pass a three-legged horse on tae the Prince o’ Wales. . . . It’s up tae you to help me,’ insisted Rab.

‘The best way I can help ye is tae shoot it.’

‘Na, na! I’ll hae a calf oot o’ it ony-way. But you see tae Paddy O’Toole!’

‘Richt ye are, Rab,’ said Spud, as he rode away.

Rab stood thinking about his hundred dollars.

‘D’ye ken onything aboot this horse?’ inquired a homesteader from Aberdeenshire. The horse in question was called Kicking Dan. At the moment it was barricaded in a stall. It was an ugly brute, sixteen hands high, ears back, eyes bloodshot, and teeth bared ready to rip the liver out of the man who dared to compel its devotion to an eight-hour day. This animal was a real Bolshevik.

‘Ay,’ said Spud, smiling, ‘I have heard aboot this horse. Nearly every fermer in Sask. has had a turn o’ it. Its faither wis a mustang that chowed the leg aff a coo, an’ its mither knocked oot the bottom o’ a hearse in Calgary. When it wis a foal it took a pun’ o’ steak aff the hams o’ a cowboy, an’ they tell me it can nick the back oot o’ a man’s breeks like winkin’.

‘It’s me that kens that,’ was the solemn interjection of the Aberdonian. ‘I haenae a guid pair o’ troosers left. Cannae get near the brute at a’! When I groom it I tie cannon ba’s on tae its feet. When I feed

it, I drap the hay doon frae the loft wi' a bit o' string. I widnae mind that sae much, but the beast's got a twist in its puddin', aye takin' colic, an' keepin' me runnin' a' nicht wi' hot bags, bran mash, an' linseed-oil. Man! I'm dune this time, an' I've never been dune before.'

'What did he say aboot it?'

'He telt me it wis aff the strain o' Baron Buchlyvie, an' its mither wis the prize mare Gentle Jessie, that got first at Stirling, but was kill't tryin' tae stop the Aberdeen express wi' its back-end.'

'I never heard the like o't,' murmured Spud. 'A' the same, it's your fault.'

'Man! I like tae hear you talkin'!' was the scornful reply. 'Buyin' horses is as hard a job as lookin' for diamonds in Saskatchewan. An' O'Toole can get round ye. Awfu' saft in the tongue! Sae easy-asy, simple-looking, tae. D—— it, I've half promised tae tak' a couple o' Clydesdales frae him, an' I've never seen them. I'm tellin' ye yon man could sell linoleum in Kirkcaldy, beer in Alloa, an' saut herrin' in Aiberdeen.'

'You'd be better tae shoot it,' Spud suggested.

'Na—na. I'll get something oot o' it,'

‘Hoo can ye dae that?’

‘I’ll feed it on treacle tae get its coat nice an’ silky, then dope it wi’ laudnum, an’ sell it tae Rab Mackenzie along the road.’

‘You’re no’ sae daft,’ Spud mused aloud.

‘I come frae Aiberdeen.’

‘You look angry th’ day,’ Spud remarked to an American homesteader later in the afternoon.

‘Guess I’m as sore as a bull that’s been hit with an axe. That son of a —— (O’Toole) has rooked me for a thousand dollars. Sure! Gee! if I had him I’ll riddle his carcass with lead, and get the crows to eat his eyeballs out.’

‘But I thocht you Americans were a smert lot,’ Spud remarked, with a twinkle in his eye.

‘I guess that “guy” could make you believe that a Shetland was a Clydesdale, and that a cow was a bull. The day that he sold me that bunch of coughing milk-cans, he “put over” on the manager of the C.P.R. farm a Holstein with a pedigree as long as the Kings of Yurrupe. When they got the darned cow home, didn’t they find out that it was a cast-off out of their own herd! The

same "guy," two years ago, sold me the wickedest lump of horse-flesh that ever mushed corn. Yes, sir! I guess that horse was a lineal descendant of the brute that ripped the stomach out of a kid in Montana.'

'But I cannae see hoo you were diddled sae easily wi' that lot there,' said Spud, pointing to a bunch of cattle, thin, dejected, and forlorn.

'I know it now,' exclaimed the American. 'Why, he's a regular snake-charmer. Yes, sir! He kept me walking round that bunch of stuff (the cattle), and for a time never mentioned the deal; just telling the biggest darned yarns I've heard put over. But, say! They made me smile. He's got a real good collection from all the grog-shops and red-light divans. Why, the "guy's" a regular cyclopædia o' wine an' women, bad baccy, an' beer. All the time he's foolin' you with the dope that you're the biggest noise that ever chewed gum. He's as confidential as a millionaire makin' up to one of the kids in Ziegfield Follies. Gee! the way he whispers over the back of his hand gives a fellow the feeling that he's getting stuff straight from President Coolidge and the King of Yurrupe.'

‘Ay, ay!’ interrupted Spud, ‘but I want tae ken hoo he selt you the cattle.’

‘Guess the money was out of my wallet before I came out of the trance. But I remember he said they were prime stuff, out of an English breed, well ticketed at all the shows in the Old Country. Told me not to worry about their being out of condition. Reckoned that was due to a drought in Montana. But on sweet grass and a touch of oil-cake, he reckoned I could double the price in six weeks, and get the top figure from somebody’s corned-beef outfit. I woke to the trick on the way home; all the boys were out asking me where the —— I got the bunch of ribs from. . . . Listen to them coughing!’

‘What will you say to him when you meet him?’ asked Spud.

‘I guess I’m out to shoot him, but I’d bet he’ll make me stand him a drink instead. Yes, sir.’

Spud, now on his way home, chuckled inwardly as he pondered over the exploits of Paddy O’Toole. Paddy, however, had overshot the mark; he had rooked a couple of Scotsmen—hence the bother, the telegrams, and now the order for his arrest. Catch-

ing him would be a hard job; he was as elusive as a trout. But Spud, hoping for a stroke of good fortune, made for the little prairie town, where information might be secured.

The wooden hotel in town was not busy. Still, a few strangers were about. Spud mixed with them in a casual way. Noticing a nice, jovial-looking old gent, with a confident face, and the outward evidence of solid respectability, he manœuvred towards him.

‘Have you seen anything of Paddy O’Toole?’ Spud inquired.

‘Divil a bit,’ was the stranger’s reply. He was apparently offended by the suggestion.

‘I’m lookin’ for him,’ declared Spud.

‘So are the Sheriffs of Montana.’

‘A hard case, eh?’

‘Sure, an’ I don’t know his like at all; but I must be off to the train. Step down the road wid me, an’ I’ll tell you about him.’

As they went out of the door, the old gentleman took Spud’s arm in a friendly way, and confided that Paddy was beyond the influence of his arm. ‘Why, didn’t he sell Kickin’ Dan to the Bishop of Montana, an’ didn’t the baste throw the Bishop like a boy tossing a ball?’

‘Have you ever met him?’ Spud inquired.

‘To my sorrow! He’s a blaggard, I’m tellin’ ye. I don’t mind the clever dale over a nag, but he double-dales an’ sells prize cows to farmers, an’ the very same bastes he bought as calves from his dupes! It won’t do, at all, at all. I believe you could get him right now!’

‘Where?’ said Spud eagerly.

‘Right here in town!’ declared the old man, as they moved towards the train. ‘You’re a young man at the business, an’ I’ll help you,’ pulling his card-case out of his pocket. With a pencil he wrote something on the card, then placed it in an envelope.

‘There’s the summons an’ conviction,’ said the stranger, handing Spud the envelope as he boarded the train. ‘Give that to Bill Hopkins up at the hotel. If he’s not in, open it, and ’phone the message. He’ll fix you right on to Paddy’s trail. . . . Good-bye, constable. . . . Glad to know you. . . . I’d be rale pleased to give you a bucket of Scotch when you come down my way. . . . Bye-bye.’ And the old gentleman waved adieu.

‘Cheerio,’ said Spud, turning away, and

walking towards the town again. 'What an obliging old chap! . . . A good sort. . . . Ay, an' he has given me a clue,' mused Spud.

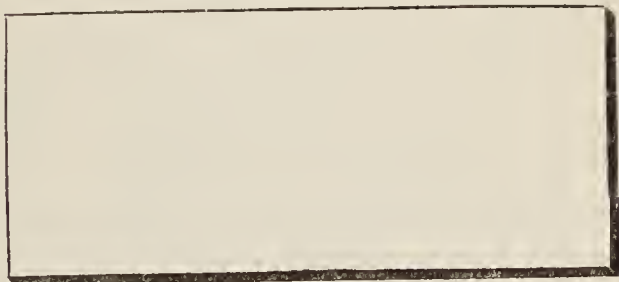
Bill Hopkins, however, was not at the hotel—never been heard of in the hotel at the town.

Rather puzzled, Spud opened the envelope. On looking at the card his eyes opened wide with astonishment. Then he burst out laughing. The card read as follows:

With Compliments from

PADDY O'TOOLE
HORSE DEALER
MONTANA

[P.T.O.]



CHAPTER VII.

THE MOURNER FROM GREENOCK.

ALL sorts of people travel through Canada. One of the most remarkable passengers that ever entered the Colonist car was 'The Mourner'—the name given to him by his fellow-passengers. He was a tall, thin man of uncertain age, with a conical-shaped head, long solemn face, eyes exuding sorrow, and lips that drooped in the disappointed manner, and his voice had a moan in it suggestive of the wind in the auld kirkyard. He walked slowly, and, now and again, suddenly looked behind to see if he was being followed. The morning sun, a child's laughter, the antics of a pet cat, or a small boy standing on his head never roused a smile on his face. Women—even beautiful women—caused no flutter in his breast. Solemn, sad, and mournful, he paced the carriage, now and again tapping his waistcoat pocket to see if his bismuth tablets were there, and occasionally shooting his hand into his swallow-tail coat to feel the key of a mysterious box at the end of the car.

Such a personality cannot escape attention. The old maids, of course, were much interested; they whispered about him. Many views were expressed, but the three outstanding ones were—(1) 'That 'he must hae indigestion or the bile'; (2) that 'mebbe he's a victim o' melancholy'; and (3) that 'a bad wumin has jilted him.' The men formed the opinion that he was 'no' a' there,' while the young girls dismissed the subject with the thought that he 'wisnae weel.'

Spud Tamson, who was travelling with the train, somehow gained his confidence, and to Spud he came for information when he felt inclined.

'A fine day,' said Spud, in his cheerful way.

'I don't think so,' said the sad one, sitting down.

Spud burst out laughing.

'I'm telling ye!' he declared. 'It's a drop o' Kruschen you need.'

'I've tried it,' was the solemn reply.

'Try hard work, then. If ye had tae ride the prairie an' groom a horse every day, ye wud be as cheery as a lark.'

'I've worked a' my days; life's just a

drag. I'll be gled when my time's up,' said the doleful one, feeling for his bismuth.

'Life's what ye make it,' Spud replied.

'It's a fraud; we're born intae misery, dragged up in misery, an' die in misery. The climate of Greenock is——'

'So you come from Greenock?'

'Ay; cauld — wet — gray — grim. Jist a morgue!' and he shook his head.

'I ken a lot o' cheery folk in Greenock,' said Spud.

'Ay! up in the asylum.'

'You're no' weel the day; hae a cup o' tea?' Spud suggested.

'No' the noo. I'm thinkin'——'

'Whit aboot?' interjected Spud.

'The National Debt. It's awfu'. Thoosands o' millions, an' we cannae pay it aff. I've written tae *The Herald*, sent figures tae oor M.P., an' had bills printed for oor society ("The Society o' Serious Men"), but I cannae get satisfaction. Thoosands o' millions. Thoosands o' millions. Ay! Ay! An' thae feather-headed men an' weemin'—pointing to the other overseas passengers—'are bletherin' aboot jumpers, the Rangers, "Itchy Koo," an' the richt wey tae shoogle the feet in the jazz. It's time the Judgment wis here. Ay! Ay!' and he wagged his

solemn head from side to side like the pendulum of a grandfather clock.

‘You’re ower sensitive,’ said Spud. ‘If you wid waggle your legs in the reel, an’ jine in the chorus o’ Harry Lauder’s sangs, the world widnae be sae gloomy.’

‘Bah! I weesh Tam Carlyle wis here agen. We need his thunder. The Scots are turnin’ intae a lot o’ squeakin’ canaries wi’ the brains o’ a hen an’ the yap o’ a dug. I’ve spent twenty year tryin’ tae mak’ folk think, but it’s useless. We’re doomed—doomed!’

‘I’m no’ sae shair about that.’

‘I ken! I’ve spent my holidays coontin’ the number o’ normal faces in Sauchiehall Street. Five per cent.; that’s a’! The others were odd, sad, an’ gettin’ back tae the ape. The men were aye spittin’; the women have bandy legs; the weans wi’ their wee red noses suggest they’ve been brocht up on tea, jam, an’ cough lozenges.’

‘Did ye ever hae a look at yersel?’ said Spud indignantly.

‘Often! A dasht miserable-lookin’ creature tae. Nae wonder! Twa thoosan’ year o’ rain in Greenock. Five hundred year o’ robbery an’ invasion at the hands o’ Hielan’ Jews an’ Irish Do-littles. Three hundred

year o' fire, brimstone, and that picter o' hell invented at the Reformation. Twa hundred year o' steam whistles an' factory bells. A hundred year o' politeecians that screw an' rob you in taxes. Fifty year o' junk in the music-halls. Fifteen year o' "Ninepence for fourpence"; an' five year o' the character-destroyin' dole! Is it surprisin' that we've got faces like the cauld gray stones o' the Martyrs?'

'You're a pessimist,' declared Spud.

'I cannae be an optimist,' said the man from Greenock, dropping a bismuth tablet into his mouth.

'Whit wey?'

'My faither wis a pessimist; my mither wis an osophist; I was lang in comin', an' conceived in gloom. Born in a thunder-storm, wi' the rain stottin' aff the slates, an' the doctor swimmin' up the stairs. Brocht up on texts, tea and treacle scones, pease scones an' kale. Shut up on Sundays; shoved oot on Mondays. The schulemaister skelpit me till I could repeat the Ten Commandments. On the road hame the minister gied me tracts aboot the boy that wis burned tae daith for stealin' a hot pie. Like the Eskimos, I only got a peep

at the sun when the sun felt inclined. For eleven months o' the year I had tae walk—or swim—in galoshes and sou'wester. Nae wonder I got indigestion!'

'Did ye no' hae a lass?'

'Never! I hae nae use for weemin. If Jane Welsh couldnae charm Carlyle, there's no' a wumin born that can make me happy.'

'Jings! I cannae make you oot at a'. Did ye no' read books aboot adventure an' love?'

'No! I wis brocht up on second-hand editions o' John Mill, Dante, and De Quincey, an' bound copies o' *The Undertakers' Gazette*. We had a mort-cloth on the paurlor table, an' the plumes o' a black Belgian horse hingin' frae the chandelier. My mother had sciatica, an' my faither asthma; our only visitors were men an' weemin who talked aboot daith.'

'An' did you never laugh when you were a boy?'

'Once.'

'When wis that?'

'When the black horse sat down in the windae o' a egg-shop. But I wis fined £5 or thirty days; so I've never laughed again.'

‘You’re very depressin’,’ said Spud, who was getting worried.

‘The world’s depressin’,’ was the solemn reply, as the pessimist dropped another tablet into his mouth.

‘Whit’s that you’re eatin’?’

‘Bismuth. I’m no’ like some folk that can eat ingins, garlic, even cinders. I’ve never kent whit it wis tae hae a guid feed, as the barbarians say. Instead o’ playing golf an’ ping-pong, I’ve had tae spend my spare time readin’ medical books so as to dodge daith an’ try tae get enough money in the bank tae pay for patent medicines in my auld age. If I look the picter o’ misery, I’ve tried to be happy. At hame I’ve got editions o’ Mark Twain, Thackeray, and Dickens; but this indigestion keeps them shut, an’ throws me back on Carlyle, Dante, and the last edition of the National Debt.—If you can get me a gless o’ hot water I’ll be obliged,’ added the dyspeptic passenger, suddenly changing the subject.

‘I can dae that,’ said Spud, making for the pantry.

Spud returned in a few minutes with the glass of hot water.

The Mourner sipped this for a few minutes, and then inquired, 'D'ye think we'll get tae Vancouver a' richt?'

'Oh, ay. Nae fear o' that.'

'Whit about the Red Indians?' whispered the consumer of bismuth. 'I heard in Greenock they were awfu' deevils for chowin' the heids aff the emigrants.'

Spud burst out laughing.

'It's no' a laughin' affair,' protested the Mourner, feeling for his tablets again.

'Ach, awa'! The Indians lang ago used tae scalp the white men, but you're as safe as the bank'—pointing to the Mourner's bald head. 'A' the Indians think aboot noo is the price o' fur, gramophones, an' chewin'-gum. Dacent folk! The last yin I saw wis cuttin' up a gramophone wi' a ham-knife.'

'Whit for?'

'Tae see if he could see the man that was singin' "inside the box," as he explained.'

'But they say the buffaloes are awfu' bad . . . chergin' railway trains. . . . Ay, an' they tell me the prairie wolves nick the ham aff yer legs when ye step oot tae the back-door at nicht. . . . I've brocht a gun,' he whispered.

Spud smiled, and asked if he had ammunition.

‘Na! I’m sae dasht feart o’ the thing that I didnae get the bullits. I thocht that if I just pulled it oot it wid frichten bad men or beasts.’

‘It’s a lump o’ sugarallie ye need,’ said Spud sarcastically.

‘Man! Man! You’re a thoughtless body. Dae ye never mak’ proveesion fur the ills that micht come tae ye?’

‘You’re no’ weel,’ declared Spud.

‘Mebbe no’! Mebbe no’!’ said the Mourner, shaking his head; ‘but I’m weel fortified again’ calamity. It’s a strange country. Ay! Ay!’ And he dropped another tablet into his mouth.

‘You’re very depressin’.

‘Ye ken the reason onywey.’

‘Bein’ born in Greenock?’

‘Ay.—Dae ye think we’ll get tae Vancouver?’ repeated the traveller, changing the subject.

‘I’m sure o’t,’ said Spud, smiling.

‘I hope so. I hope so. I have a big job on there.’

‘Whit’s that?’

‘Bringin’ a man back tae Greenock. He left Greenock on his bare feet, an’ feenished

up a millionaire. Noo he wants tae lie in the wet grun o' his ancestors. I'm dasht if I can understand him at a'.'

'Is he deid?' exclaimed Spud.

'Ay.'

'But hoo can ye bring a deid man a' that wey?'

'I've got his coffin on the train. It's a gran' job. Oak, silver handles, a silver plate, an' silver studs a' roon' the box. Six black silk cords tae drop him in the grun'; an' I got the commission on a black Italian marble monument, nearly twenty feet high—a long column wi' an angel on the top, as if she wis fleein' awa' tae Heaven wi' his soul. A guid job. . . . It'll be a grand funeral. I've engaged fifty black horses. We'll hae new plumes on the hearse that day; that wis his orders before he died. I'm reckonin' on three hundred mourners, an' I've arranged for a' the blinds *en route* tae be *drapped* as the hearse goes by. It's tae be a grand funeral,' he exclaimed, in a manner almost cheerful.

'You're awfu' enthusiastic aboot daith,' Spud remarked.

'Ay. That's my trade—an undertaker.'

CHAPTER VIII.

BAULDY MACGOWAN, FRAE HAMILTON.

SPUD TAMSON had been given three weeks' leave, which he decided to spend in a trip through the Rocky Mountains and on the steamers which trade on the Okavogan Lake. At Okavogan landing he boarded the s.s. *Ceepeear*, a very fine ship which called at the pretty little fruit farms that bordered the lake, taking on board great cargoes of apples, pears, plums, and peaches, as well as numbers of fishermen, who were loaded with salmon caught in the mountain pools. Several tourists had with them small brown bears, not long severed from their mammas, and these pets enlivened the day's routine. But the star turn on board was a steward called Bauldy MacGowan, who hailed from Hamilton. Bauldy was a wee, dumpy man, but as nippy as a ferret. On the books he was marked as forty years of age, but it was said he was sixty. In spirit he was a boy—a very tough boy at that. Like all Ancient Mariners, he had

a supreme contempt for modern methods, and the luxuries of turbines, freezers, &c. Bauldy's squat nose and red face were aggressive yet kindly. He made friends with Spud at once, introducing himself with the remark, 'Were you no' in the "Glesca Mileeshy"?'

'Ay,' Spud replied.

'You'll ken me, then,' declared Bauldy.

'Were you in the Mileeshy?'

'No; but I come frae Hamilton, though I've been on the sea the maist o' my life. But my faither was the man that kept the cock canaries.'

'Canary MacGowan?' inquired Spud.

'That's him; mebbe you'll mind o' him liftin' the first prize at the Miners' Show.'

'Ay; he lost the bird on the wey hame, did he no'?'

'The same! He was fu'. The man that got second was tormenting him, and he hit him wi' the cage, an' killed the canary. . . . But,' said Bauldy, changing the subject, 'mak' yoursel' at hame in the boat. You can hae your meals wi' me an' the crew. I'll lend ye my rod for the fishin'.'

Spud spent many happy days on board. Soon he was almost a member of the crew,

and he often joined them in ragging Bauldy, whose aggressiveness could only be kept in order by 'leg-pulling.' One day a young steward slipped, spilling a plate of soup on the dress of a passenger. When the passengers were on deck, Bauldy 'let go' about 'the awfu' things ca'ed stewards nowadays.'

'If I had a shillin' for every plate you've dropped, I wid be able tae hae a guid holiday,' said Spud, in defence of the young steward.

'Me!' exclaimed Bauldy, who had a carving-knife in his hand.

'Ay, you!'

'I'll cut your fat head off if you talk tae me like that.'

'Ach! Cut awa'! You couldnae cut the stalk aff a cabbage,' Spud replied, as he got together his own dinner.

'Hear, hear!' said the young steward.

'The impidence o' young stewards is the bloomin' limit,' proclaimed Bauldy. 'When I was a young——'

'Tell me the old, old story;

Tell me the old, old story;

Tell me the old, old story

Of wind-jammers l-o-n-g a-g-o!'

sang the whole army of stewards.

'Ye whelps o' Hades,' roared Bauldy; 'it

was the likes o' me that pioneered the western trade. If you had been brought up in the wind-jammers ye wid ken something aboot sea life. You an' the sailors an' stokers are just a dasht lot o' milk-sookin' orphans. I've carried plates when the bow o' the boat wis up in the air an' its stern hauf-wey down tae Davey Jones's locker. It wis me that took the wheel in the *Mary Ann* when the sailors were hidin' below an' the captain on the bridge lost his teeth tryin' tae hang on tae a rope.'

'I have heard that stuff in the auld man's hame,' said Spud mischievously.

'You'll hear again, tae,' insisted Bauldy, shoving his face against Spud's. 'Ships cannae get tae sea these days unless the Board o' Trade is satisfied that the stores are supplied wi' jujubes, milk chocolate, bath buns, an' babies' pooder for the wee dearies in stewards' bonnets. If you had kent what it wis tae eat saut pork, chew biscuits leevin' wi' weevils, an' drink rain waater catcht in a slop pail, mebbe ye wid ken the western trade. A' you young fellows think aboot is dodgin' work, eatin' piles o' duff, skulkin' in odd corners readin' Blue Library tosh, an' killin' time wi' a' the bonnie lassies on the boat.'

‘Ach! you’re jist jealous. You’ve had your day. It’s soor grapes wi’ you. I think it’s time we put roon’ the hat tae gie ye a pension. You wid look weel in an auld sea-bonnet, clay pipe, an’ a blue suit, sittin’ on the promenade at Rothesay tellin’ a lot o’ wee laddies aboot the time you saved the *Mary Ann* by drinkin’ hauf a barrel o’ rum an’ haudin’ on tae the wheel, thinkin’ it wis your bed. A’ this stuff aboot ancient mariners is played oot. We’ve a’ been tae schule, an’ don’t forget it,’ said Spud, winking to the stewards.

Bauldy, his mouth filled with roast-beef, a slice of bread in one hand and a carving-knife in the other, jumped off his seat. The challenge of the new school had to be met at all costs. He gulped the roast-beef down his throat, and then, waving the carving-knife about, declaimed: ‘The darned cheek! . . . The likes o’ you talkin’ tae me like that. You’re the sort o’ chap that wid take the breeks aff Nelson, an’ walk aboot the third saloon wi’ Jellicoe’s sword as if you were the whole bloomin’ cheese—Merchant Service, Navy, and a’ combined. You ken as much aboot boats as a hen does aboot walkin’ a tight-rope. The only sail you’ve seen is the sail on a penny boat floatin’

aboot your mother's jaw-box. But I've been on boats.'

'The Govan ferry-boats,' interjected Spud, hiding a grin, and getting on with his dinner.

'No; sailin' ships, brigs, schooners, and cutters,' protested Bauldy. 'I've been wrecked ten times, an' sailed three weeks in the captain's dinghy. But what dae you ken aboot boats? You telt me yoursel' that the first time you were at lifeboat drill on the troopship you had your life-belt upside doon; you were so dasht feart that you had a bottle o' leemonade in yin pooch an' the ither pooch fu' o' jam tarts; an' ye brocht up a ham-knife tae cut the ropes, thinkin' that wis the way tae launch the boats.'

'I didnae ken; the mileeshimen were kiddin' me on, an' they telt me tae dae that. I'm only an apprentice,' said Spud, suppressing a grin.

'You're no' an apprentice at your dinner!' roared Bauldy.

'No; I had tae get a certificate frae the Board o' Trade tae keep my belt weel filled, so as tae help you tae haud on tae the wheel o' the *Mary Ann* on pey-days.'

'I can keep my feet on pey-days or any ither day!' exclaimed Bauldy.

'But no' your heid,' was the swift reply.

‘The company keeps me here tae see these orphans richt. There’s no’ wan o’ them kens the difference between a fender and a port-hole. If they were telt tae bring the log tae the captain, they wid tak’ up a log o’ wood. Only yesterday, I heard the first officer say to that yin (the young steward) that his pipe was lyin’ in the cable store, an’ I’m dasht if he didnae go intae the wireless room an’ start lookin’ for it among the telegraph and cable forms. An’ last year I heard you (M’Luckie) tellin’ a lassie at Greenock that the screws o’ the boats were like the screws that haud up windaes an’ doors. But what bates a’ is the story aboot you (Spud) tellin’ a passenger that a windlass was invented by Nelson to wind lassies on board.’

‘I wis only jokin’,’ declared Spud.

‘You didnae ken enough aboot ships tae joke. It’s the men that were brocht up in the wind-jammers that ken their way aboot. As long as I am on this boat, you should sing dumb.’ And Bauldy resumed his dinner.

‘Michty me!’ exclaimed Spud, as he dipped a piece of bread in gravy.

‘What you chaps need is disceplin’,’ mumbled Bauldy, his mouth now well filled.

‘You’re chock-fu’ o’ insubordination,’ remarked Spud.

‘Mebbe; but I’m intelligent. When ye ken your job, the company permits ye tae speak your mind. Disceplin’ was invented for fools, an’ nearly a’ the men at sea to-day are ruddy fools.’

‘I’m glad you’re sayin’ it yoursel’.

‘I’m no’ talkin’ aboot mysel’, but you, an’ you, an’ you,’ pointing with his carving-knife to all the juniors.

‘Wis it you auld yins that won the war?’ asked Spud.

‘No; we stopped the war. You young things were on the ten-thoosen-ton boats; we auld sea-dogs were on the destroyers an’ mine-sweepers. When you lads were fillin’ yersel’s up wi’ Irish stew an’ blewmonge we were jookin’ torpedoes or cutting the nobs aff German mines wi’ a six-inch saw. At Jutland, I wis hingin’ on tae the heels o’ a German cruiser, spittin’ bullits intae her magazines, an’ shootin’ the corners aff the square heids o’ the German officers. When oor flag wis shot awa’, it wis me that went up the mast an’ nailed anither yin on wi’ tin tacks an’ the heel o’ my buit,’ boasted Bauldy.

‘I didnae see your name in the papers,’ Spud reminded him.

‘Na,’ said Bauldy, somewhat taken aback; ‘ye didnae see my name in the papers.’ Then, recovering, he added: ‘A’ you young fellows think aboot is gettin’ your name in the papers. I’m modest. I wis brocht up tae expect nothing an’ dae onything, frae shuttin’ a port-hole tae bashin’ a German’s heid aff. It wis the likes o’ you chaps that they invented armour-plate for. When I jined the Naval Reserve, the thing then wis tae see the whites o’ the enemy’s eyes an’ then cut them doon; nowadays, the men are sae dasht feart tae leave their woodbines, ice cream, an’ best girls that they fire guns twenty miles awa’, get a man in an aeroplane tae tell them if they’ve hit the funnel or the ocean, an’ then hook it hame an’ get intae the early doors o’ the picter-hoose tae see “Hoo ‘They Won the War.” I’ve no dasht use for you babies in sailors’ bonnets. You chaps should be wrapped up in cotton wool an’ stuck in the Kelvingrove Museum.’

‘It’s gey funny,’ said Spud, ‘that a’ the V.C.’s were young men.’

‘Have I no’ telt ye that you chaps have tae be kidded on; unless you get lured wi’ plum duff, bounties, an’ a pawnshop on your chest you’ll no’ go tae war.’

‘We’re talkin’ aboot the Merchant Service;

no' the Navy,' Spud reminded him. 'The papers said it was the Navy that won the war.'

'The Navy won it, but the Merchant Service stopped it; that's the difference between us an' them. They're "The People," but we're "The Goods."'

'You're as vain as an auld peacock. There's nae livin' wi' you at a', ' said Spud.

'It's no' vanity,' Bauldy insisted; 'it's experience an' superior intelligence. I've learned the Western Trade, like Drake, Hawkins, an' Grenville. I can wait a table, fire a gun, launch a boat, an' jook a torpedo wi' a turn o' the wheel. When I go to sea, a pair o' troosers an' a needle an' thread is a' that's in my kit-bag; but you chaps cannae move an' inch withoot woodbines, milk chocolates, flannel binders, and cod-liver oil. When I leave the Merchant Service, this country'll need tae retire frae the shipping business. It'll no' be lang before you see a monument in George Square tae

BAULDY MACGOWAN,

THE MAN

THAT MADE THE WESTERN TRADE.'

CHAPTER IX.

THE LASSIE FRAE DUNDEE.

IT is a far cry from the 'Blue Mountains' of Dundee to the prairies of Saskatchewan. The 'Blue Mountains' are a mass of stone and lime inhabited by people who are as brave and cheerful as people can be when herded in the slums. But the prairies are broad and rolling, and for ever calling you, me, and the men and women of Dundee.

Lizzie T——, a pale-faced girl from the 'Blue Mountains' of Dundee, alighted nervously on the small railway platform erected on the prairie. She had come in search of a vision: she was now knocking at the great door of Hope and Opportunity. The train moved on, and Lizzie stood—alone. No, not alone, for the ways of the North-West Mounted Police are truly wonderful; and as the tail of the train turned the bend a red-headed trooper galloped on to the scene. The girl, more nervous—or was she homesick?—paled still more, and wondered at the open spaces, the miles of golden grain, and

this man in the red coat. For a moment—just a moment—she craved for Dundee. Then she was startled, for she heard the Doric. Spud was inquiring, ‘Are you the lassie frae Dundee?’

‘Yes,’ she replied, and burst into tears—heart-sobbing tears. She had never left home before; she had always moved in the shadow of gaunt tenements, huge mills, and been one—just one—of thousands who poured in and out of the mill-gates in response to a steam-hooter or a bell. At a glance, the powerful trooper took in her story—twenty years of poverty, twenty years’ hard labour in the land of hooters, chappers-up, bells, forbidding gates, and machines which clanged and clanged and clanged.

‘Cheer-up, lassie. You’ll be happy here; they’re kind folk on the prairie, and, in time, you’ll ca’ this hame,’ said Spud, placing his hand gently on her shoulder.

‘I’m sorry, sir, for bein’ foolish, . . . but . . . I couldnae help it. . . . Ye spoke sae kindly, . . . an’ I was thinkin’ o’ hame.’

‘Ay, lassie, I ken the feelin’; I’ve had it mysel’. But when I ride aboot the prairies seein’ hoo the puir folk have become rich an’

happy, I thank God for this great Western land.'

'Have I far tae go?' inquired the girl, now more composed.

'Twelve miles.'

'Twelve miles!' she exclaimed.

'Ach! that's naething at a'; but hae a cup o' tea,' and Spud pulled a thermos flask out of his holster. Dismounting, he poured the tea into a metal cup, then gave the girl a piece of real good Canadian apple-pie.

'My! that tastes guid,' and she smacked her lips.

'No' bad; that's the dish of the country. Mrs Mackay—your mistress to be—telt me tae be sure an' gi'e it tae ye, so as to warm the cockles o' your hairt. It strikes me, lassie, you'll need a lot o' apple-pie tae mak' up for the tea-dinners ye had in Dundee.'

'Ay, ay,' she said sadly; 'I'm only eight stone, an' havenae been weel for a long time. Mebbe the change will gi'e me the turn.'

'I'm sure o' that,' declared Spud. 'I've seen lads an' lassies gettin' off this train lookin' like ghosts, an' noo they're big and bonnie wi' the prairie air. Oh, it's grand!

Dae ye no' feel licht on your feet a'ready? We're 2000 feet above the level o' the sea. In the mornin' I whistle like a canary, an' I can dance frae sunset tae sunrise. But here's the buggy. Ay, 'Tam's driving,' he mused, suddenly changing the subject.

'Wha is Tam?'

'Tam was yince a wild keelie boy in Glesca, but Dr Cossar got the haud o' him. Noo he's foreman tae the Mackays. A grand worker.—Hello, Tam,' and Spud waved to him.

'I see you were first,' shouted Tam, a tousy-headed, good-natured youth about twenty-five.

'Oh ay; the man wi' the best horse wins. But I'll introduce the lass tae ye. "Miss T—— tae Tam Gleg."' "

'Glad tae meet ye,' said honest Tam. 'Jump up here. Spud'll throw in your box. I hope ye brocht a pot o' Dundee marmalade wi' ye.'

'I did that,' she exclaimed.

'Mrs Mackay'll bless ye for that. She's frae Dundee—used to stey up in Baxter Park Terrace. But it's gettin' late, an' we maun hurry hame.' And Tam cracked his whip. Spud saluted like a cavalier and stood looking, looking at the buggy disappearing over

the trail. The mist was in his eyes. Another soul had been rescued from the slums—another soul had entered the Promised Land.

‘Whatever has kept ye, Tam Gleg?’ exclaimed Mrs Mackay, a fine, handsome woman.

‘We were talkin’ on the road,’ said the blushing Tam.

‘Talkin’! ye rascal, an’ the lassie hasnae had a dinner since she left Saskatoon! But, lassie, I’m real gled tae see ye.’ And, though Lizzie had been hired as a maid, Mrs Mackay, touched with the girl’s delicate frame and home-sick look, took her in her arms as if she were her own. Great tears rolled down the lassie’s cheeks. She was not home-sick now. No, she was touched with the warmth of her welcome. Yes, she would love the Mackays.

‘Come up the stairs,’ said her mistress, leading the way; ‘here’s your room.’ And she opened the door of a room so clean and sweet with freshly-pulled prairie flowers. Above the bed was the motto:

KIND HEARTS ARE MORE THAN CORONETS,
AND SIMPLE FAITH THAN NORMAN BLOOD.

‘I hope you’ll be happy here,’ said Mrs Mackay, as she helped the girl off with her coat.

‘I think . . . I ken . . . I’m sure I will,’ she replied softly, hiding her emotions by hanging her head.

‘We’re plain folk, lassie; easy tae get on wi’. My man is a good, kind lad frae a Forfar farm, an’ the three bairns are jist dearies; they’ll a’ be guid tae ye. But come awa’ doon for your supper.’

‘No’ the noo, Mrs Mackay. . . . No’ the noo. I’m a’ nerves. . . . I’m excited. . . . I’m sae happy,’ she explained.

‘Lassie! I ken fine. The nicht that I came to the Prairie, I wept for Dundee, but no’ noo. I have my man an’ my bonnie bairns, an’ we’re landlords noo, an’ there’s a pickle in the bank. Canada has been kind tae me; Canada’ll be kind tae you.’ And she stepped softly through, closing the door behind her. Lizzie, overcome with travel and excitement, lay down on the bed. A thousand thoughts were flashing through her mind. Strange; yes, all was strange. No noises. No cars. Still—oh, so still! Dundee was over four thousand miles away!

For a few seconds there was a mad and overwhelming desire to fly back to stone

and mortar, chappers-up, hooters, bells, mill-gates, and the surging crowd. Then the madness passed, and she heaved a sigh. The battle with home-sickness was over. Into her nostrils came the sweet scent of prairie flowers. Through the window she saw the setting sun—a huge ball of gold, dropping, dropping down behind the far horizon. She smiled . . . she fell asleep.

Lizzie awoke at 5 A.M. and wondered how she could show a sign of her love. She received an inspiration. Quietly she dressed herself and slipped downstairs. She would light the range, . . . yes, lay the table, . . . ay, and cook the breakfast ready for the Mackays when they came down. But she could not find the coals. So she opened the door which led to the yard. In the yard stood Tam Gleg, rubbing his eyes and yawning. ‘A fine mornin’,” he said.

‘Ay. . . . Where’s the coal?’

‘I’ll show you,’ declared Tam.

It was really Tam who lit the fire, Tam who showed her how to handle the American range, and Tam who cut the bacon and the bread. And how they enjoyed the fun! When the step of ‘The Maister’ was heard on the stair, the clever Tam dis-

appeared, so that the lassie should have the credit of the job.

‘A fine mornin’, lass. . . . Ay, and a grand start. You’ll get on in Canada.’ And Mr Mackay patted her kindly as he went out of the door.

Mrs Mackay came into the kitchen all smiles, and the three bairns put their arms round Lizzie’s neck.

Eighteen months later Spud was riding past the farm, when his eyes saw a face which he thought familiar. Yet he was not sure. ‘You’re no’ the lassie frae Dundee?’ he inquired.

‘I am,’ declared Lizzie.

‘Well, I never! Your cheeks are red and bonnie——’

‘Ay, an’ I’m jist eleeven stane three without my coat,’ she said, smiling.

‘That bates a’; the prairie air is better than Dundee?’

‘Ay.’ And she disappeared indoors. But Dundee failed to stir her emotions; she was now a daughter of the prairie, invigorated with the bracing air, self-reliant as all Canadians are, able to ride and drive a lively broncho, and, better still, beloved by all for her cheerfulness and courtesy. Cupid,

too, had delivered the goods! Tam Gleg, rough but honest, was the hero of her dreams.

One evening, just before the harvest, Tam and Lizzie were walking down the trail. It was a night to be happy. The air was balmy, the birds were singing their lullabies, the golden grain waved gently to and fro, and the cattle in their paddocks were munching peacefully.

‘Lizzie,’ said Tam, in a bashful way, ‘I’ve been aye gaun to ask ye.’

‘What, Tam?’ said the girl, dropping her head.

‘If ye wid like to leave the Mackays.’

‘I’m no’ shair. . . . I’m no’ shair. They’ve been kind and good tae me, Tam.’

‘Ay . . . an’ tae me tae; but,’ said Tam courageously, ‘I want tae marry ye.’

‘I wid be real gled tae be your wife, Tam,’ was the honest reply of the girl, who halted and looked at him in a tender, faithful way.

‘Lizzie, you’re a darlin’.’ And he folded her in his arms.

‘But, Tam, . . . what are ye gaun tae dae for a leevin’?’ she asked, an hour later.

‘Here you are,’ said Tam, pulling a letter out of his pocket. She read :

DEAR TAM,—I saw Colonel Dennis passing through yesterday. He says he can give you 160 acres near the Mackays; £42 down and £39 10s. for thirty-four years. After that, the place is yours. The best o’ luck tae you an’ the Lass frae Dundee.—Yours sincerely,
SPUD TAMSON.

CHAPTER X.

MAKING A GLASGOW AGITATOR WORK.

THE prevention of crime is the first duty of the North-West Mounted Police. This has been the rule for fifty years. No officer or constable is permitted to deride the law or seek notoriety out of 'a cheap offence' or 'a manufactured crime.' An empty police court and a blank charge-sheet are considered evidence of efficiency and diplomacy. 'Silence' is a tradition. Unlike a few police officials at home, there is no vulgar posing for the camera; no writing of memoirs which glorify murderers and crooks; and, generally, seeking fame and promotion by pandering to sensationalism, thus aiding the demoralisation of the masses and destruction of the highest code of civilisation.

Another excellent feature of the North-West Mounted Police is the insistence on initiative and personal responsibility. Spud

Tamson early discovered that, with a beat fifty by fifty miles in extent, it was useless—and not expected—to 'phone for higher direction when faced with a crisis. Quiet and well-ordered as the prairies are, at times there arises a problem requiring instant action—action combined with diplomacy. For example, in the township which Spud controlled there arrived a gentleman with an ugly reputation. He called himself 'a harvester,' but he was a libel on that honourable name. Somehow or other he and a few more 'won't-works-and-will-talks' smuggled themselves amongst the 12,000 decent men who, unable to find employment at home, went forth to Canada to cut the harvest and play the man. . . . This army of 12,000, with a few exceptions, pluckily maintained our national traditions for grit, self-respect, and a good day's work. All that the world has heard of, however, is the cry of the failures—the lamentations of certain unemployable men who smuggled in the van.

'Fighting Jock' was the title given to the ruffian who disturbed the peace of this small prairie town. Powerful in build, loud and coarse in speech, and with all the stock

phrases of soap-box oratory, he soon gathered a number of followers. Unlike the old pioneers, these men spurned the narrow way; they must have the broad and easy road, with all the comforts of the Sautmarket in the shape of soup-kitchens, 'doles,' and warm beds from philanthropic folk. As Jock declaimed, they had 'won the war, and by heavens they werenae gaun tae work on farms a' winter-time.' And so they endeavoured to turn the township upside down. Local Labour Lights backed them, too.

But there are limits to patience and philanthropy. Church organisations in Canada have no objections to feeding decent men when work is not available; but, with farmers offering work, the case is different. Fighting Jock had outstayed his welcome. He had lived—and was living—like a prince; now he was turning the town into a bear-garden. Under the influence of bootlegged liquor, he was fired to oratory and insolence.

'We want booze,' he roared at the hotel-keeper.

'I guess you'll have to smell it out. This is a dry town. You shove your nose where

you've been swigging the bootlegged stuff all day. Get!' was the order of the landlord.

'I'll knock your big fat heid aff,' roared Fighting Jock.

The door opened just then, and 'a red-coat' entered.

'Ask "The Mounted,"' said the landlord, pointing to the stern-looking Spud.

'Ach, I don't give a rap for "The Mounted,"' said Jock, turning round.

'Hear, hear!' said his drunk friends.

'We won the war,' roared Jock.

'Ay—on munitions and agitatin' on the soap-box at nichts,' said Spud.

'You're a liar!'

'I've got your record here,' answered the policeman, tapping his pocket; 'let's hear nae mair aboot the war. You and the likes o' you have mair to say about the war than the five million men who won it.'

'But we'll hae our richts—the richt tae eat an' the richt tae sleep,' exclaimed Jock in an aggressive way.

'You never mentioned work, I noticed,' was the quiet reply of the policeman.

'That's our business—no' yours.'

'It's my business when you disturb the peace o' a dacent toon. You've had a lang

rope; it's my job tae see you don't become a public nuisance.'

'We'll hae free speech onywey,' insisted the ringleader.

'Canada is as free as Glesca Green or Hyde Park. You can speak awa', but you're no' gaun tae turn this toon into a model lodgin'-house, and—you've got tae work.'

'The d—— cheek o' you!'

'Less o' that,' said Spud firmly.

'Ach! I could knock lumps off ye wi' wan haun'—the ither ahint my back.'

'Go on, Jock! Go on!' roared his pals.

'Enough o' this back-chat,' said Spud; 'I'm here tae keep law and order. I'm ashamed o' your laziness an' insolence. Oot here we have patience for a while, but you've reached the limit. Mebbe the country is new tae ye—mebbe things are strange and sometimes hard—but it's a good country, an' I'm no' gaun tae see you let us doon. I'll be fair; if you'll take jobs I'll forget a' this an' be a freen tae ye a'. What dae ye sae?'

'We'll please ourselves; we're no' gaun tae be forced tae work,' said Jock, still aggressive.

'Man! ye make me ashamed o' my race,

This toon—ay, the prairie—wis made by the Scots, an' here you are, lettin' us a' doon.'

'Awa' an' mind yer ain business,' was the contemptuous retort from Jock.

'I'm feenisht arguin',' said Spud, throwing off the mask of the diplomat. 'Get!' and he pointed to the door.

'No' for you, or the whole darned bunch o' the Mounted Police.'

Spud walked to the door, turned the key, and, as he unbuttoned his red coat, remarked, 'It's you an' me for it; you've insulted Scotland, insulted Canada, an' insulted the Mounted Police. I'm gaun tae make ye intae a man. Come on! aff wi' your coat!'

'Wha are ye kiddin'?' was the sneering reply; but beneath the words was the note of fear.

'Get it aff,' demanded Spud.

'Richt ye are;' and Jock threw off his coat, and made a fearful blow at the policeman's stomach.

'You low hound!' exclaimed Spud as he evaded the blow, and then let him have an upper-cut below the chin. The man staggered, but recovered.

'Go on, Jock! Go on Jock!' roared his pals.

But Jock had met 'The Mounted' all right. Hard trained and hard bitten, always alert, and game to the last, Spud tackled his man clean and fair, evading cowardly blows and dirty catches, and finally crashed him to the ground with a powerful right, which ended the *mêlée*.

'I'm feenisht! I'm feenisht!' declared the bully, as he got up.

'But I'm no' feenisht wi' ye yet,' said the policeman, as he calmly put on his red coat.

'The jail noo, eh?'

'No; we're too busy in Canada tae bother aboot the jail. But I'm gaun tae make ye work,' Spud explained as he unlocked the door. Throwing it open, he gave the order—'Quick march!'

Jock sullenly led the way, followed by his band. Spud jumped on to his horse's back, and herded them right out of the town on to the trail. After a three-mile march, they came to a tin hut labelled:

DETACHMENT—

R.C.M.P.

‘In here,’ said Spud, opening the door. They trooped in, and Spud followed.

‘Look here,’ he said, addressing them in a tactful way, ‘I’m gaun tae gi’e ye a last chance. You can sleep here the nicht. I’ll gi’e ye a supper. In the mornin’ I’ll see ye get jobs wi’ the farmers. If you’ll no’ dae that, then you’ll be handcuffed and sent tae jail.’

‘We’ll take the jobs,’ said Jock, still sullen.

‘Richt ye are. . . . Sit in, an’ hae a bit o’ supper, lads,’ said the generous Spud.

They sat down, made an excellent meal, and, though still surly, they went to bed in a better frame of mind.

Next morning Spud distributed the band over a number of prairie farms, taking care to place Fighting Jock under the rule of a good Canadian who had served through the war. As Spud rode away, Jock cursed inwardly, and vowed revenge. He had been made to work—a compulsion impossible in the Old Country owing to paternal legislation, the accommodating ‘dole,’ and the too handy casual ward for men of the won’t-work type.

Jock commenced operations in an angry

mood. He hated the job, hated the farmer, hated the whole scheme of prairie life. His brain was steeped in the one-sided culture of Karl Marx, the shallow philosophy of corpulent secretaries of Ca' Canny Societies, and an insane obsession about the Master Class.

There are wrongs in this world—grave wrongs—but there also is a madness concerning the Rights of Man. Man was made to work, and all must earn their bread or pay the penalty. Genuine unemployment is a sad and serious thing, but sympathy with the work-shy is futile and dangerous. Jock could not understand why the Overseas Dominions did not provide 'doles' and State machinery which condoned loafing and permitted loud-voiced demagogues to blackmail the State.

Nevertheless, there was a good side to the character of this new farm-hand. An old blind farm-horse roused his pity and affections. He fathered it, fed it on dainties, and always carried a lump of sugar from the table to the barn. And there was a cattle dog—Towser by name—who made no distinction between farmers and farm-hands, capitalists and socialists. Towser

rubbed his nose into Jock's hands, and wormed his way into his heart.

The main cure was the prairie air. No pessimists are found at two thousand feet above sea-level. Dawn on the prairie is the most inspiring scene God ever made. And there is witchery in the broad prairie lands—something that soothes and also inspires. Honest toil, too, makes for a cool brain, a calm outlook, and acceptance of the things that be.

In brief, Jock found his manhood on the plains. That fierce hatred of all blessed with a few more dollars passed away. Real freedom surged through his veins—the freedom of the plains, the spirit of the man with the axe, the spirit of the old pioneers. To conquer Nature—to tame the prairie—became his aim; he lived for smiling fields, nodding trees, pretty flowers, and the caress of Towser and the old blind horse. From Karl Marx he passed to Wordsworth, R. L. Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, Henry James. Life, hitherto grim and filled with morbid dreams, became pleasant and filled with sweet content. The Prairie had made him a Man.

One day Spud, while riding the long,

long trail, met Jock, husky, brown, and fit, on a fine gray horse.

‘What’s on th’ day, Jock?’ Spud inquired.

‘Man! I’m gaun tae a big thing th’ day.’

‘Oh!’

‘Ay. . . . I’m just ridin’ doon tae the post-office tae cable money tae bring the wife oot here.’

‘So you’re happy noo?’

‘Ay!’ said Jock, with emotion; ‘awfu’ happy! I think it’s the air.’

‘An’ something else,’ Spud interjected.

‘Whit?’

‘Hard work.’

CHAPTER XI.

THE TYPIST FROM KELVINSIDE.

SPUD was cantering through Buffalo Horn Valley, and on the point of passing Bachelors' Corner—the roosting-place of five bachelor farmers—when he saw John Macintosh actually painting the outside of his shack. 'There must be a reason,' mused Spud, as he pulled up at Macintosh's fence, and shouted, 'Hoo's a' wi' ye?'

'Fine, Spud; fine,' was the genial reply of the big sunburnt man from Midlothian.

'I've never seen ye at that before,' said Spud, pointing to the new paint.

'Mebbe no'.'

'And makin' a garden, tae?'

'Jist a notion—jist a notion,' answered John.

'New curtains, as weel?'

'Oh, ay.' And he blushed a little.

'Been cuttin' your hair, tae?'

'Ay.'

'Whit's up?' said Spud, getting to the point

‘I’m tired o’ seein’ my ain face in the gless, an’ haein’ only men roon’ the doors. It’s time there was a wummin body here tae keep things in order. So I asked a freen at 25 Bothwell Street tae advertise for a housekeeper.’

‘Ony replies?’

‘No’ yet; but I’ve hopes.’

‘I’m gled tae hear it—get on wi’ the good work,’ said Spud, pointing to the paint-pot as he rode away. As he passed the other four bachelors’ farms he was struck with the atmosphere of apathy and carelessness which enveloped the buildings. No shady garden, no nice belt of trees, windows without curtains, hens hopping in and out of the sitting-rooms, and puppy dogs tearing the half-washed shirts off the fence. Spud concluded that the prairie was a good place for making money, but a tough place without a woman’s hand. Without women, most men are sluts, and almost unwashed barbarians.

WANTED, Housekeeper for prairie farm; comfortable home; Scots girl preferred.—Apply John Macintosh, Buffalo Horn Valley, Saskatchewan.

This advertisement caught the eye of Bessie Cochrane while sitting in the Kelvin-side car. Her eyes opened, and her breast

heaved with excitement. She was seized with a premonition that that advertisement would influence her future life.

‘Fare, please,’ said the conductor—for the fourth time.

‘I’m sorry.’ And she blushed at her temporary severance from mundane things. Taking her change and ticket in a mechanical way, she was soon deep in another day-dream. No wonder!

She was twenty-eight. For twelve long years she had beaten the same old trail. Up at 8 A.M.—a hasty breakfast; a rush for the car—the same yellow car, same faces, the conventional ‘Good-mornings;’ the usual landmarks—Kelvin Bridge, Woodlands Road, Sauchiehall Street, St Vincent Street; then, pushing the used ticket in Dalrymple’s waste-paper box, she would alight and, in three minutes, be thumping out the old, old tale—

‘Dear Sir,

With reference to yours, &c. &c.’

Bessie was a good-looking girl; in her youth she had queened the tennis crowd at Kelvinside, and also led the throng when tripping the light fantastic over the polished floor. She had had lots of sweethearts, but, somehow, she had missed the road to

the Altar of Hymen. Though outwardly calm, within was revolt. She was tired of routine, tired of bricks and mortar: she was really in the grip of the wander lust—or was it the feminine craving for Romance? Anyhow, Romance was now knocking at her door.

‘Housekeeper, . . . housekeeper’—that job was buzzing in her brain. But Bessie could not cook a haddie, and her brothers declared she ‘always boiled the eggs ower hard.’ Still, she was strong, willing—yes, and honest. The Cochranes, like most of the folk in Kelvinside, were solid. Suburbia is the mainstay of commerce, and a bulwark against the gee-gaws of a low-bred internationalism. There is a pride which conceals hard times and poverty. No vulgar seeking for the ‘dole.’ How quietly, how bravely they face misfortunes. ‘The stuff of men! The stuff of heroes!’

‘What’s up th’ night, lassie?’ said her father, a nice old gentleman who maintained the prestige of his race on £4, 10s. per week.

‘Read that, dad.’ And Bessie passed a letter.

The old man put on his specs, and read:

TO JOHN MACINTOSH,
SASKATCHEWAN,

DEAR SIR,—I beg to apply for housekeeping post. Though I am a typist, with no experience of house-work—indeed, my brothers say I cannot boil eggs!—nevertheless I am strong, cheerful, and willing to learn. I shall not expect a bed of roses, and, if you select me, I shall honestly attend to my duties.—Yours faithfully, BESSIE COCHRANE.

Tears trickled out of the old man's eyes, his hands shook, and, for a moment, he was nonplussed; then, bracing himself up, he said in a kindly way, 'If it's to be, lassie, it's to be; we'll no' stop ye; we'll help you wi' your fare; but, I'm sorry—I'm sorry.'

And, with bowed head, he stepped slowly out of the room. Putting on his hat, he went for a walk towards Anniesland. For the first time in his life he saw the soot on the face of tenements, was annoyed at the clang of the cars, and disturbed by the honk—honk—honk of whirling motor-cars. In a flash, he gripped the reason for Bessie's letter. It was the cry of the soul for room, more room, open spaces, the smell of mother earth, and the colours of nature, which form the mainspring of romance. He

turned about, muttering, 'The lassie's richt. And young birds must flee—flee awa'.'

John Macintosh intended to keep secret the coming of the housekeeper; he kept it, too, until a few days before the girl arrived. But, wide as the prairies are, 'somebody in Glesca kent somebody that kent anither body fermin' in Saskatchewan.' Bachelors' Corner became alarmed. A woman! Instinctively the hands flew to the scrubby chins; next, the eyes looked over the old torn suits of jeans, boots tied up with strings, and the dog yawning on the top of bed-linen. As for the houses—well, they were just middens. Loudly the others cursed Macintosh for bringing a woman there. But, after reflection, they took scrubbing-brushes, and went down to the slough and scrubbed themselves; they followed this up with a good shave, and three days' cleaning of the mess inside the shacks. Finally, they sent an S.O.S. to Eaton's Stores:

Mail right now 50-dollar suit of clothes. Urgent.

As for Macintosh, he had gone off his sleep ever since he cabled for Bessie Cochrane. It was fifteen years since he left Midlothian;

for fifteen years he had lived in that shack. Poor John really wondered what he should do, what he should say, when meeting a lady from the Old Country. Before a mirror, he rehearsed how he would salute her at the station. Should he say, 'How d'ye do?' or 'It's a fine day'? He didn't know. Isolation had made him shy and fearful. He was feeling a fool, and regretting his cablegram. But the girl was coming; so he turned to the cleaning again. In a desperate attempt to get at a cobweb about the size of a plate, he lost his balance, fell off the steps, and dislocated his ankle. Poor John hopped on one leg to the 'phone, and rang up Spud.

'Hello,' said Tamson.

'I've put my ankle oot; that lassie is comin' off the Trans-Canada Express the morn. Will ye drive her up in the buggy?'

'Richt ye are,' said the willing Spud, who, like all 'The Mounted,' was always willing to perform one good deed a day.

When the train stopped, Spud looked for a country lassie with the brand of the farm in her make-up; but he was astonished to meet a fashionably-dressed girl, carrying an expensive rug, with luggage of the solid order.

‘You’re no’ the housekeeper?’ he asked.

‘I am,’ was the cheerful reply of Bessie Cochrane.

Spud smiled and scratched his head.

‘Why are you smiling?’

‘You’re no’ like the Prairie,’ he replied.

‘What do you mean?’

‘Ower dainty . . . too well dressed . . . I’m kin’ o’ feart.’

‘What about?’

‘That John Macintosh’s place’ll no’ be guid enough for ye.’

‘I’ll tell you when I see it. Are you driving me?’

‘Yes.’

They got into the two-horsed buggy and started off over the brown prairie trail—so soft, rather ruddy, dusty too, but running through miles and miles of golden grain. There were no tears in her eyes; she was of ‘the stuff’ that can pioneer. Behind her was home, and dear, dear folk, but before was hope and immortality, for good prairie women are numbered with the saints. She was smelling mother-earth, deep, brown, and warm. She was breathing prairie air—the air that intoxicates and thrills. On the way she saw bonnie bairns galloping home from school, and sweet prairie women kissing the

bairns as they fell off their ponies at the farmhouse doors. And Glasgow was not so far away; for by her side was Spud, speaking the rich Doric of his town, and telling her of the days when he 'used tae sodger wi' the toffs from Kelvinside.'

But the gilt was off the gingerbread when they arrived at Bachelors' Corner. Her quick eyes saw the mess and muddle round the doors. Oh dear! This was not like the picture she saw in La Scala—not the picture of her dreams. And the four bachelors were not in riding-breeches—no sombreros, no nice red mufflers round their necks. No; they were standing at the fence, clad in awful-looking standardised clothes. Of course she was disappointed. Realities sometimes jar.

'Here's the hoose,' said Spud, as he turned the horses' heads into John Macintosh's farm.

'I cannae get up—cannae get up,' John shouted from the veranda.

'What's wrong? What's wrong?' asked the astonished girl.

'He twisted his ankle cleanin' the hoose.'

'For me!' she exclaimed.

'Ay, for you.'

'Poor man!' And she hopped off the

buggy. Walking up to John, she took his hand in a kind way, saying how sorry she was to see him laid low.

‘I’m richt enough, if it wisnae for my ankle; but I’m rale angry at no’ bein’ up tae hae the kettle on.’

‘I’ll do that,’ was the prompt reply.

So she went indoors. What a topsyturvy scheme of things! A real man’s way of shoving the plates on the piano and the bread on the floor. And, oh! there was a bally old hen laying an egg on the bed, while a couple of dogs were sleeping soundly on a counterpane. It was all rather disturbing to one used to a highly-ordered scheme of civilisation. Ay, and there was a lump in her throat as she lifted the sooty kettle to fill it and put it on the stove. But she mastered her woes, as good women usually do, and made the tea; yes, and fried the ham and eggs. For the first time in fifteen years John Macintosh had his meal off a clean cloth, and his tea out of a cup which had really been washed. Things were looking up!

The novelist should write that Bessie Cochrane declared everything to be lovely. That never happens under such circum-

stances. John, no doubt, had done his best, but a man's best in domestic matters is usually a low standard. When John had recovered, Bessie bluntly said things were all muddled and half dirty. She would not stay unless she got a free hand.

'There's the telephone,' said John; 'order what you like.'

Bessie went to the 'phone, and asked the lumber-merchant to send a new house.

'Whit's that?' exclaimed John.

'A new house,' Bessie replied.

'I cannae dae that—I cannae dae that.'

'Then I must go back.'

'Oh! All right.' And he succumbed.

The lumber-merchant had a new house up within three weeks. Bessie insisted on a cool veranda, fly-screens, a good American stove, a few labour-saving devices, and an ice-cream freezer. John passed the lot, except the freezer.

'It's warm. . . . We must have it,' insisted Bessie.

Again John succumbed.

When John entered the house complete, he was astonished at the design, the coolness, the comfort, so many conveniences so dear to the feminine mind. If Bessie could not cook a haddie in Kelvinside, she some-

how managed to roast a leg of mutton, make some nice sauce, also a real good apple-pie and vanilla ice-cream. The meal was served on the cool veranda. Hitherto the flies had always buzzed around John's ears and plates at meals. Now all was peace and comfort.

'It's a grand scheme,' John mumbled.

'I am glad to hear it,' said the smiling girl.

'You'll no' go back noo?' he ventured.

'No; at least, not for some time.'

'I hope you'll never go,' was his bashful suggestion.

'Why?'

'You're made for the prairie.' Then, touching her hand in a tender way, he added, 'Lassie, you're the right sort. You've carved joy oot o' the wilderness. Mebbe I'm rough, an' no' used tae the polished ways o' the toon; but, if you'll try me, I'll be a good, honest husband tae you.'

'John, you're just a dear! I loved you for twisting your ankle—for me.'

'You're worth a hundred broken ankles.' And he took her in his arms.

Thus women save men, and make the prairies glad.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PARLOUR-MAID FROM POLLOKSHIELDS.

SPRING! How wonderful it is, especially on the rolling prairie lands. The gloom of winter gives way to smiles—smiling paddocks, smiling trees, and smiling men who salute the dawn and face the farmer's task with glee. The nip in the morning air is worth ten thousand cocktails; the moving plough arouses great ambitions and lovers' dreams. Out West, all depends upon the soil; a good year means a balance in the bank—perhaps a new house, new barn, new car, or a bonnie bride from overseas. And, at this season, the eyes of the prairie folk are always on the steel rails of the C.P.R.; this is the immigration season, the coming of help or friends; and so they watch the track along which the colonist trains travel hour by hour. Each year 250,000 men and women pour into the prairie lands.

‘Gee! I wish that train was here,’ said

Syd Jennings, an American homesteader, to Spud as they stood on the platform.

‘What’s on the day?’

‘I’m waitin’ for one of these Scotch girls. Guess we need her, too. We’ve got ten kids up our way, and the missus is so darned busy that she hasn’t got time to count them goin’ to bed. Last night we found the youngest asleep with the cows in the barn.’

‘Where’s the lassie comin’ from?’

‘Glasgow. . . . One of Dennis’s bunch; he’s a mighty good fellow; sent me a couple of good men last spring; now he’s sendin’ on this girl.’

Just then a train rolled in, and the immigrants stepped out. Alas! there was no girl for Syd Jennings’s farm, but the conductor gave him a note saying she was coming on with No. 18.

‘Say! I can’t hang around here all day. Guess you won’t mind bringin’ this girl along?’ suggested Jennings to Spud.

‘Certainly! . . . What’s her name?’

‘She’s ticketed “Teenie M’Indoo.”’

‘Right ye are. . . . I’ll see she gets to your place.’

‘I’ll be a whole lot in your debt if you do,’ said Jennings as he went off.

At last No. 18 arrived.

Out stepped a perky wee body, with a red face, an alluring nose, and a pair of merry eyes—real hardy, just the type for the prairie.

‘Are you Teenie M’Indoo?’

‘Ay,’ admitted Teenie, as she grinned.

‘I’m waitin’ for ye. . . . Gi’e me your box, jump into the buggy, and you’ll soon be in your new hame.’

‘You’re awfu’ like the man I saw in the pictures at La Scala,’ she suggested as she hopped in.

‘Mebbe you’re richt,’ answered Spud as he seized the reins. ‘Noo, haud on, for thae horses have got the spring fever; you’ll no’ see their legs for stoor.’

‘It’s awfu’ excitin’,’ murmured Teenie, as the horses bolted down the trail. ‘Michty! . . . the stoor’s bad; d’ye no’ waater the roads oot here?’

‘Oh ay . . . when it rains.’

‘There’s nae pavements.’

‘No’ yin,’ replied Spud, who was firmly holding the galloping steeds.

As the buggy swung round a sharp corner, Spud was alarmed to hear the girl shouting, ‘Stop! . . . Stop! . . . Stop!’

‘Whit’s wrang?’

‘My bandbox!’ she shrieked, as the horses drew up.

‘Onything in it?’ Spud inquired.

‘Ay; my new hat an’ spare teeth.’

‘Spare teeth?’

‘Ay. . . . In my last place I had twa sets—yin for the mornin’, an’ a guid set for waitin’ at the table.’

‘I never heard the like o’ that before,’ Spud said, as he lifted the retrieved box in and took his place by her side again.

‘If you had been wi’ a missus that had the O.B.E. you wid ken about it,’ said Teenie.

‘Whaur is she?’

‘In Pollokshields. I wis five years there. She was awfu’ nice when I started; at that time she was named Mrs Smith, an’ easy-osy aboot things; took her tea oot a delf cup, like the rest o’ folk. But her man made money in the war, an’ then they got the O.B.E.—that’s hoo I’m in Canada.’ And Teenie nodded her head to emphasise her point.

‘I cannae follow ye,’ Spud remarked.

‘There wis nae haudin’ them,’ explained Teenie. ‘The man wisnae sae bad; the only difference he made wis tae hae a bath twice a week an’ get “O.B.E.” on a’ his

leather bags. But she wis the limit! . . .
“Smith” wisnae guid enough for her; she
changed it tae M‘Conkie-Smythe, an’, in-
stead of bein’ content wi’ a number on her
hoose, did she no’ get the painter tae slap
on the door

THE SMYTHES.

‘An’ that wisnae a’,’ continued Teenie;
‘for ten shillings, a man fixed up the crest
o’ the M‘Conkie-Smythes—a boar’s heid on
a soup tureen wi’ a dagger in its mooth.’

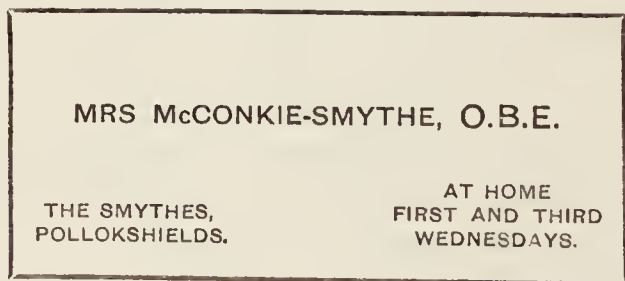
‘Whit wis the meanin’ o’t?’ Spud in-
quired.

‘I’m no’ shair; but they said it wis a
M‘Conkie that killed the last boar in Scot-
land; onyway, the crest was shoved on tae
the plates, the cups, the curtains—aye, an’
a’ the mats at the doors. She sent me tae
the Domestic College in Woodside Road tae
learn hoo tae make hors-doves.’

‘Whit’s that?’

‘Sardines wi’ cauld turnips roon’ them.
An’ I had tae learn aboot ongtrees, blew-
monge, an’ shivery jellies wi’ “O.B.E.” on

the top o' them. Miss Bruin learnt me tae announce the visitors for At Hames—ye ken, flingin' open the door and shoutin' out, "Missus Ochterlonie" or "Miss Nebbity Caw." I had an awfu' guid time at the college, but when I got back tae "The Smythes" life wis a' bustle an' stoor. . . . Ye see, she had got in wi' the heid-yins in George Square, an' wis "on the list" for Corporation cookie-shines an' fox-trots. . . . I hardly kent the wummin; she had her figure squeezed intae yin o' thae willowy pair o' corsets, ticht shoes on her feet that gied her corns, an' a "transformation" on her heid that cost a couple o' pounds. She had visitin' cards aboot the size o' luggage labels . . . here's yin o' them,' showing Spud the following:



‘That bates a’,’ said Spud; ‘but you havenae telt me aboot the teeth.’

‘I nearly forgot. . . . Ye see, my auld set cost a guinea; they were kin’ o’ shoogly, and yin o’ the front yins wis nipped aff. She didnae mind me haein’ them wi’ my print dress on, but when I got intae my black dress she insisted on new ivories. I got an instalment set tae please her . . . but here I am,’ said Teenie, throwing up her arms.

‘Did ye hae a row?’

‘Every day for the last year. She took sich notions. It wis only a six-roomed hoose, but she got a big hotel gong. . . . I wis aye forgettin’ tae chap the thing. One day when a Bailie’s wife wis in I forgot mysel’, an’ popped intae the sittin’-room, sayin’ the mince wis on the table—jist as I did before they got the O.B.E. She got fair mad, an’ forgettin’ her society talk, shouted, “Ye gowk, can ye no’ chap the gong?” . . . O.B.E.’s an’ gongs are turnin’ the world upside doon,’ added Teenie.

‘But hoo did ye stay sae long?’

‘I couldnae help it. . . . Ye see, I wis acquaint wi’ the chauffeur . . . a nice chap . . . curly hair like yoursel’ . . . clean shaved . . . smert, tae . . . an’ had aboot £50 in the Post Office. . . . He wis savin’ up tae start a leeminade an’ petrol shop at Rothesay. No’ that I wis efter his money, for I

had £20 mysel' an' a couple o' kists at my Auntie Nellie's.'

'Wis he your fiancé?' said Spud, getting to the point.

'No' exactly; though, mind ye, he bocht me that at Woolworth's,' showing Spud a brooch engraved with the words:

ONLY THEE.

'That wis guid enough,' Spud remarked.

'Ay . . . but he jooked me,' she gasped.

'Oh!'

'Lost his heid.'

'Whit . . . daft?'

'Ay . . . he got the M.B.E.'

'Whit for?'

'Drivin' a General in a Ford.'

'Did it put him aff his meat?'

'Ay! . . . me tae! . . . Widnae look at a rubber dickie, ready-mades, or a hot pie. Started wearin' a homburg, tailor-mades, an' spats, an' married a lassie that got the M.B.E. for coontin' jujubes in a canteen in Rouen.'

'Blue blood,' suggested Spud.

‘Ay . . . a penny a gill. . . . Onywey, I wis left wi’ the M’Conkie-Smythes, an’ cleanin’ silver marked wi’ the boar’s heid on a soup tureen, an’ tellin’ message-boys that they had tae bring the mince an’ haddies tae the back door. I was up a’ nicht combin’ her transformation, an’ spent every Saturday mornin’ stookeyin’ crests on the steps o’ “The Smythes.” I jist got tired o’ it, an’ asked my guid-brither in Saskatchewan tae get me a place oot here.’

‘That’s your place along there,’ said Spud, pointing his whip at a homestead away in the distance.

‘D’ye ken the folk?’

‘Oh ay.’

‘Are they nice?’

‘No’ bad.’

‘Easy tae get on wi’ . . . eh?’

‘I think so.’

‘Mebbe you’ll ken their ways . . . that would be a help,’ she suggested.

‘The wife’s a Canadian—a nice sort o’ body, one o’ the United Empire Loyalists.’

‘Whit are they?’

‘The swells that left America rather than chew gum under the Stars and Stripes.’

‘So she’s a toff?’

‘In a wey . . . yes, but easy to live wi’. She eats her breakfast standin’. She’s got ten bairns, an’ cannae sit doon for stappin’ meat in their mooths.’

‘Is the man nice?’

‘Oh ay, . . . he’s an American.’

‘Is he a gentleman-farmer?’

‘He’s a farmer when he’s sober, but a gentleman when he’s fu’. They tell me he’s a great character. When he gets a gless o’ rye whisky he insists on bein’ ca’ed “Colonel.” Every American is either a President or a Colonel,’ Spud explained.

‘I thocht they were democratic oot here,’ Teenie suggested.

‘In some things they are; but every man that makes money in Canada or America writes hame for a pedigree.’

‘So they’re Tories?’

‘Ay . . . an’ they tell me that auld Jennings had tae leave America——’

‘Whit for?’ interjected Teenie.

‘For tryin’ tae shoot a man.’

‘Oh!’ she gasped.

‘Don’t worry; you’re safe enough. . . . Ye see, Jennings wis fu’ at the time, an’ a Canadian called him a “Yank.” Says he, “You blue-nosed beaver, I’ve the blood of the Penns and Washingtons in my veins;

an', what's more, you maple-syrup-faced coon, I'm off the Pilgrim bunch—came over with the *Mayflower*—yes, sir."

"“You're a liar!” said the Canadian.

"“Bang! . . . Bang!” went Jennings with his gun.'

'He's like the M'Conkie-Smythes,' Teenie said.

'Ay,' mused Spud.

'So there's snobs here tae?'

'We're a' snobs. . . . Jist look at Jennings's gate'—and he pointed with his whip at the post, as he turned the horses' heads into the drive. Teenie looked, and saw a rough board with rude lettering:

SYD JENNINGS,

BALMORAL TOWERS.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAWYER'S CLERK FROM EDINBURGH.

‘CURSE the war! . . . Curse the day I saw the lights and lures of cities. . . . D—— Aug. 4, 1914! . . . It cost me my degree. . . . Doomed me to an office stool. . . . A lawyer’s clerk! “Digs” up a close. . . . Brose and margarine. . . . No hope. . . . No friends at court. . . . “A land fit for heroes!” . . . Bah!’

Thus mused Donald M’Leod in his humble Edinburgh lodgings. Donald was the tenth son of a crofter. A clever lad. The old folks had starved themselves to have him ‘college bred’ and wag his head in the Court of Session. But 1914 intervened. Like his breed, he heard the call. With ‘The Queen’s’ he fought and bled in those ghastly trenches which circled round the awful Acha Baba. Now, like thousands more, he felt that the Great War had been fought in vain, and seemed a cruel fraud. What grieved him most was the lack of air,

movement, the opportunity to bank a few pounds for old age—above all, the cry of the soul for a roof to house the woman of his dreams. For love, men have died; but Donald M'Leod did not mean to die in the way prescribed by novelists. He meant to live and win. And so he turned his back on the Law. With a £5 note he walked aboard the good ship *Metagama*.

'Hello! A stranger,' muttered Spud Tamson while riding the prairie trail which led from Buffalo Horn Valley towards Regina. As he neared the man, he saw he was tired, badly clothed, hungry, too.

'You're a new chum,' said Spud, drawing rein and dismounting.

'Yes,' said the weary Donald M'Leod.

'Dead beat?'

'Ay—ay,' and Donald sat down in a languid, almost hopeless, way.

'I'm thinkin' it's a square meal ye need,' Spud suggested.

'Mebbe! Mebbe!' was the dreamy response.

'Get up, then! Jump on the horse! I'll walk, for I'm tired o' the saddle,' was the diplomatic suggestion.

'I'll manage to walk—I'll manage,'

mumbled Donald, as he stumbled to his feet.

'Come on! Mount!' was the firm command of the kind-hearted Spud, as he lifted him almost bodily into the saddle.

The strange procession then slowly advanced over the dark brown trail.

Donald M'Leod woke up next morning in the Detachment Hut of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

'Feelin' better?' Spud inquired, as he hurried up with a billy-can of tea.

'Thanks to you.'

'Old soldiers never die,' was Spud's cheerful retort.

'I'm not so sure about that. I was dead beat yesterday. It's h—— being out of a job.'

'But there's plenty o' jobs on the prairie.'

'True. . . . I've had a go at two, but I'm soft. . . . Things are strange. . . . I'm not sure that this is the life for me. . . . Still, I want to get on—want to get on,' he muttered.

'Have you been harvesting?'

'Ay.'

'It's sair on the back, . . . the hands, tae.'

‘It is that . . . look at mine,’ and the stranger showed his hands, all cut by the straw.

‘Did ye no’ hae gloves? . . . Mebbe ye didnae ken that men wear gloves when stookin’ in Canada?’

‘I know now, . . . but this life is not for me.’ And the weary one shook his head.

‘And your name’s M’Leod,’ said Spud, taking another line of action.

‘It is.’ And the speaker looked up.

‘A Hielan’man?’

‘Used to be.’

‘Man! they made the prairie. . . . Did you never read o’ the men of Pictou, Glen-garry, and Red River? . . . The men that wrought.’

‘Ay . . . ay,’ was the somewhat cynical reply.

‘Some o’ them were M’Leods.’

‘Yes, but they were strong—not shell-shocked, nor weakened with hunger at college, dinners of herring and jam. . . . We’re over-civilised. . . . But I wanted to farm . . . wanted the open life. . . . Now I’m beat.’

‘I never heard a M’Leod say that before,’ said Spud, still playing on the pride of race,

‘Mebbe no’. . . . Mebbe no’,’ was the surly reply.

‘So you’re for hame?’ was the pointed question.

‘Eh?’ said the almost hopeless man.

‘Hame?’ Spud insisted.

‘Mebbe. . . . Mebbe,’ assented Donald, but there was a touch of shame in his tones.

‘Cold feet! . . . The white feather. . . . Man! . . . you’re no’ a M’Leod at a’,’ declared Spud, looking him sternly in the face.

At this M’Leod paled with anger and jumped to his feet. ‘If I’m beat . . . if I’ve funk’d . . . it’s the war . . . the blasted war. . . . I’m not so fit. So don’t talk about the white feather. . . . You ought to know better . . . you’ve ribbons on your chest.’

‘Mebbe,’ said Spud in a quiet way, ‘but you forget I’ve seen a’ this before. The first year is the hard year. Ye cannae expect tae be as fit as a plooman straight from the byre. The war hasnae helped ye, but blamin’ the war’ll no’ feed ye or get ye a ferm. Tae be ower kind noo wid doom ye forever. If I wis your father I wid whack ye wi’ the taws and then turn ye back tae yer job.’

‘Man, that’s hard,’ said M’Leod, but less angry than before.

‘I’m cruel tae be kind. . . . You’re a Scot. We made the prairie. Dae ye see that Union Jack?’ said Spud, pointing to the flag on the pole.

‘Ay.’

‘If you go, if I go, if the whole bunch o’ Britishers go, the Canadian-born’ll be swamped wi’ foreigners an’ Yanks. Uncle Sam’s flag’ll fly insteid o’ the Union Jack!’

‘I’m sick o’ flag-wagging. When I’ve got a job and a farm I’ll think about the Union Jack.’

‘You’re cynical.’

‘I’m fed-up.’

‘Blame yoursel’.

‘Let’s talk about a job,’ insisted M’Leod.

‘I’ve got the job, if you’ll just try tae learn the prairie ways.’

‘I’ll try again,’ said M’Leod.

‘Guid man! . . . Sit doon. . . . I’ll be back in an oor.’

And Spud went out of the door. Mounting his horse, he galloped away.

‘Hello! . . . What’s on the day?’ inquired old John M’Leod, a wealthy prairie farmer.

‘I’m here for help for ane o’ your clan.’

‘Oh!’

‘He’s raw; seen ower much o’ Edinburgh. No’ strong enough yet for the binder or the ploo. But he’s got stuff in him. He’s done his bit in the war. If you’ll tak’ him, go easy; help him when he’s moody, and he’ll be a credit tae ye.’

‘I’ll be pleased tae dae that. . . . Is he a farm-worker?’

‘A crofter’s son, but college bred.’

‘A M’Leod, did ye say?’

‘Ay.’

‘Bring him on. We’ll be gled o’ his company. He’ll be clever wi’ the books?’

‘Oh ay.’

‘Jist the man,’ concluded John M’Leod.

That night Donald M’Leod was installed in the farm of his clansman. He found his room comfortable; there was a bath, too. M’Leod made him one of the family. Next day his apprenticeship commenced.

Old John was kindly and shrewd. Without hurting the pride of his clansman, he guided him day by day. For a week Donald chopped wood, which made his arms strong. For another week he rode to town for messages, and this firmed his legs and gave

him the glory of the trail and the passion for action out of doors. The third week he spent in the barn, cleaning up, learning the points of cattle, learning to milk, too. Next came the handling of a team of horses—beautiful roadsters—which spanked smartly down the trail. And then came the ploughing of the winter fallow—a harder job, but he won through.

The régime was so kindly, and the work so well-timed, that the pains of labour were not acute. Still, it was new, strange, and hard compared with the soft routine of office life. But there were compensations. The air was bracing, and sent the rich blood coursing through the veins. And how fine to enjoy every meal—yea, how glorious to be alive!

Action kills ennui, work brings joy, and the open life gives the sense of power. Doing things instead of wishing for things, though hard at first, ultimately gives peace to the soul. While the realities of prairie life did not square with the dreams en route, the said realities were not so terrible as he had imagined. Finally, the magic of the prairie bound him to the land.

But Donald was often homesick. Princes

Street has charms. Edinburgh—poor, maybe, and certainly proud—has a fascination all its own. Life in Edinburgh was easier, but Donald knew that, so far as he was concerned, it was life without hope. Still, it called. Three years at the 'Varsity, old friends in 'The Queen's,' and old ambitions about the Court of Session tugged . . . tugged at his soul. The might-have-been kept jagging, and, when a little tired, he would again curse the war.

But love keeps man on an even keel; love, though alluring, develops an appreciation of economic facts. The war also had developed his pride. Asking a girl to live in two rooms on £3 a week in Edinburgh was repugnant. Not that a house of two rooms was so bad; . . . but the future . . . the future.

MY DEAR MARGARET,—Old John M'Leod has offered me a house and put me in shares (share farming). I enclose 250 dollars for your fare. The *Montlaurier* sails in a week; catch it if you can.—Your own,
DONALD.

This was the letter Margaret Gordon received. Margaret was not a Gibson Girl, nor the petite madame who makes old gentlemen turn round in the street and young

gentlemen fall off tramway-cars. She was twenty-eight, plain, douce, and kind. Her face was not her fortune. Charles Garvice would have declined to write her up. But she was honest, good, clever with needle and frying-pan; above all, she did love Donald M'Leod, and she was far too sensible to believe that prairie was either Heaven or Hell.

But she realised that God had given her a decent man, and Canada was giving her and that man a chance to escape from tenelements, kippers, diphtheria, and the 'dole.' Of course, she was afraid of the journey, afraid of the sea, afraid of the bold bad men she had read about in books, and the cows. . . . Would they have horns? . . . Fancy being tossed by a cow. . . . Oh, my!

But she bravely marched on board the *Montlaurier*.

Now, the prairie romance does not work out as seen in those films from Los Angeles. Not at all. No cowboys. No red mufflers. No revolvers. No sheriff with a couple of guns pumping lead into the abdomen of the He-Man with the gold teeth. Just two men. Spud on a horse; Donald in a wagon. No cushions; just a pile of straw,

on the top a lot of good rugs. But Margaret never noted such trivial things. It was Donald—her Donald—her own dear man. Of course, it was rather awkward kissing him before Spud; Spud, however, suddenly looked at a bird in the sky! Then they all drove off to a manse. There was no scene about the word 'Obey'—sensible girls have no time for that. Nevertheless, this was a sweet romance.

'Oh, Donald—how nice! I made up my mind for a one-roomed shack, but this is lovely. Four rooms—a bath—such a nice veranda—and the flowers! . . . Donald, you're just a dear! . . . It's so kind of you.'

She didn't kiss him; she just burst into tears—tears of love and joy.

Even brides come back to earth and 'auld claes and parridge.' From a shop in Princes Street to a prairie farm was a big jump. Margaret missed her view of the Scott Monument, and pined just a wee bit for a peep at the Castle and the Gardens; and at night, when all was still, sometimes longed for Mum and Dad.

But time works wonders, and the tie

to that good prairie home was the coming of a child—a pretty little mite, with two wee eyes which twinkled like the stars.

‘Isn’t she lovely?’ murmured Margaret.

‘She is wonderful!’ exclaimed Donald.

‘We’re Canadians now, dear.’

‘Yes. . . . God and Canada have been kind.’

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TEACHER FROM FIFE.

SCHOOL TEACHER Wanted for Buffalo Horn Valley School, Saskatchewan; no attractive or very young woman need apply.—Applications and testimonials to be sent to Chairman, School Board.

THIS advertisement was the result of an all-night sitting of the School Board. The cause of the bother was a pretty young teacher, who had eloped with a prairie farmer, making the fifth marriage from the same school in one year. Seven women to every man is unknown out West. The shortage of women is one of the perplexing problems of the prairie. And when a sweet young lady comes along—especially one who can play the piano and warble ‘Annie Laurie’ or ‘Last Night I Saw You’—the whole bachelor population can’t be kept off the school telephone or away from the school door. No wonder the School Board was in a fix! And who could blame them for placing the ban on youth and beauty?

The chairman, a bachelor—Dugal Cameron by name, and a stickler for education—was determined that no more weddings would happen in that school. He was tired of the disorder due to frequent changes—and, speaking confidentially, he was annoyed that the last lady had refused the offer of his hand. Henceforth he meant to be a woman-hater, even at the expense of having a crotchety old maid teaching in the district school.

A month later the chairman received a bunch of letters, and the following one interested him greatly:

AUCHENAUCHEN, FIFESHIRE.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to apply for the situation advertised. My age meets with your requirements, and, so far as I am aware, great beauty is not mine. I am a farmer's daughter, a graduate of St Andrews University, and have had an excellent training in general school-work in Dunfermline. As I am not likely to elope, and never had an offer of marriage, I hope you will appoint me. Testimonials enclosed.—Yours faithfully, (Sd.) JANE MERTOUN.

‘We’ve got the right sort this time,’ Dugal Cameron said to Spud Tamson next morning when meeting him on the trail.

‘Who is she?’

‘A Fifeshire body.’

‘Auld in the horn?’

‘Ay.’

‘Specs?’

‘I fancy sae.’

‘A ticht mooth?’

‘I hope so.’

‘Flat heels, cut hair, and a walkin’-stick tae hit the men?’

‘It’s likely; she’s precise in her letter—writes like yin that has nae time for love or dances.’

‘Did she send her photo?’

‘No.’

‘Mebbe she thocht it wid frichten ye?’

‘That kind o’ body never has a picter taken—so they say.’

‘You’ll be safe this time.’

‘I hope so. . . . Man, I’m fair seeck o’ the bother in the school. And the last yin diddled us a’.’

‘Includin’ yersel’.

‘Nonsense! . . . Nonsense!’ said Dugal, hurrying off to hide his embarrassment.

Jane Mertoun was duly appointed. The letter containing the news made her the happiest teacher in Scotland. She was tired of Auchenauchen. It was a narrow world,

with little appreciation for a keen disciple of Froebel and Montessori. Devotees of the parish pump did not approve of plasticine with which the bairns modelled 'Tam the Tailor' and 'Fatty M'Kay.' Who ever heard of bairns actually laughing in school? And, just imagine, she taught them dancing. Dancing! It was enough to make John Knox rise out of the grave.

But there were other reasons, mainly feminine. Romance was absent from Auchenauchen. It was so old — so well established. Marriages, somehow, were not made in Heaven, but settled after a talk with a banker concerning the 'account o' So-and-So,' or a careful reconnaissance of a lassie's 'bottom drawer,' &c. At the root of the whole bother was seven women to every man. The village was packed with eligible women varying from twenty to thirty-five years of age.

Under such circumstances men take their pleasures lightly, holding love cheap, having their fling with all, but, when 'settlin' doon,' selecting the lassie with the biggest tocher. Materialism! Grim and repugnant. Why should she, Jane Mertoun, scramble for anything in trousers? A university education develops pride and ability to

analyse the psychology of men and babes. Jane, though in love with the bairns, was really glad to bundle and go. She did want to see the world. The wander lust had risen; the prairie was calling . . . calling her across the sea.

Meantime the prairie telephones were busy.

‘Hello! . . . that you, Spud?’ said Nick Tanner, an American farmer.

‘Ay! . . . it’s me.’

‘When’s that new teacher comin’ up our way?’

‘Ask Cameron.’

‘He is not sure.’

‘Neither am I.’

‘Gee! I’d like to know. . . . Say, she’s mebbe a relation of mine. My old grand-dad came from Fife.’

‘Is that why ye tie your boots wi’ string an’ get “brilliantine” for your hair oot o’ the railway grease-box?’

‘I’ll pack you with lead! . . . But, say, let me know.’

‘Ach! . . . Awa’ to Hong-Kong,’ said Spud, banging the receiver down.

‘Hello! . . . Hello! . . . Hello!’

‘What’s up noo?’ roared Spud; he had been running to the ’phone all day.

‘It’s me, . . . Bud Dunning.’

‘Whit’s wrang wi’ you?’

‘When’s that girl coming? . . . Guess I’d like to see——’

Spud banged down the ’phone again.

Now Jane Mertoun was travelling in the Trans-Canada Express, enjoying the ever-changing scene from the carriage window, and excitement rising as she was whirled over the rolling prairie, sun-kissed, a mass of golden grain, and, snuggling behind the fields, alluring little homesteads, churches, and schools.

It was all so fresh, so new, pregnant with wealth and hope, and calling . . . calling that teacher in the train. Ten minutes before reaching her station she covered her eyes with a ferocious pair of horn spectacles, pulled a little hat well down over her brow, enveloped her figure in a wide raincoat, and then, seizing a gamp, stood waiting for the train to stop. Whether she was acting a part we do not know, but she alighted and walked down the platform in such an aggressive manner that all the hayseeds (farmers) made way in awe.

‘Gee! She’ll shake the old town up,’ a farmer whispered.

‘Some woman! . . . She’ll scare all the darned men and horses in town,’ a friend replied.

‘No more marriages in that school,’ was the judgment of the crowd.

Jane bundled her bags into a waiting Ford car, and was whirled away over the prairie trail. For miles and miles she seemed to travel. At last she saw a little school, and next to it ‘The Teacherage,’ as it is called—a dainty three-roomed house, all on its own. The late school-ma’am was waiting; she gave Jane a hearty welcome, followed by a good prairie meal, and then showed her the school. The formalities over, the late teacher departed, and Jane went to bed in a cosy room.

School-children on the prairie are not punctual as a rule, but that morning they made their ponies gallop all the way. The ‘ugly’ teacher—so said the gossips—had arrived. The little ones wondered who she was, and if she was as ugly as the advertisement demanded. My word! The big black goggles frightened them, and, though she spoke in a kind and tender way, she

was firm. Children are shrewd in their judgments; and their verdict was 'Miss Mertoun is nice.'

But Miss Mertoun did not like the interior of the school. It was too bald—too much like a barrack-room. Not enough pictures, and the equipment was incomplete. Nothing for fairy tales, no coloured chalks, no drawing-paper, no plasticine, and no piano, and the floor was unfit for dancing drill. This would not do. At lunch-time she 'phoned Dugal Cameron, the chairman.

'Hello! . . . Yes, Miss Mertoun.'

'I want a lot of things.'

'What?'

'The school painted, more equipment, and a piano.'

'We have nae money.'

'You will have to get the money,' was the stern reply.

'No' the noo; we're busy in the fields.'

'But I must know now,' was the teacher's swift answer.

'I'm ower busy.'

'I simply must have these things, Mr Cameron.'

'Wait till the fall.'

'No!'

There was something in that 'No!' that

frightened Dugal Cameron; so he said, 'I'll come doon to-day.'

Jane Mertoun put up the receiver and resumed teaching. Prairie children generally dawdle on the way home; that day they galloped, carrying over the prairie the news that 'Miss Mertoun is the nicest teacher in the world.'

Dugal Cameron motored to the school in an angry mood. He was a strong-willed, capable man, unused to the imperious demands of womankind. He regretted his advertisement; and, at the moment, had a dislike—or was it a fear?—of Miss Jane Mertoun. He opened the door of the school in an angry way, prepared to meet a ferocious dame in black goggles. Instead, he saw Jane—without the goggles—a smiling woman of twenty-eight, well built, neatly dressed—in short, a woman with looks, character, and courage.

'I'm . . . surprised,' he said, putting out his hand.

'Why, Mr Cameron?'

'You're no' as ugly as we advertised for.'

'I don't know that I'm beautiful, but why should a teacher be ugly?'

‘If they’re ower bonnie they get married; we’ve had five in a year.’

‘That’s good for Canada, isn’t it?’

‘Ay . . . but bad for the schule.’

‘Well, what about painting, . . . the equipment, . . . and the piano?’ said Jane, changing the subject.

‘You can hae the Kingdom o’ Heaven,’ said Dugal, falling under her spell.

The prairie has boundless wealth; men who were either labourers, serfs, or city gamins are now squires of smiling acres, independent of the harsher side of feudalism—individualists fired with that courage and ability to stand alone, to take the good years with the bad, and carry their own load of responsibilities past ‘The Buroo’ and all the other parasite-breeding agencies which destroy character and initiative by the medium of the ‘dole.’ The prairie is merciless to the parasite; its rewards are only for the brave, the smiling, and the free.

But there are problems, too; the hunger for culture, for the secrets of Grimm, Andersen, Lewis Carroll, and R. L. Stevenson is there. Isolation also tempts some men to forget, and some women to slow down; but in the main the insistent call is for light—for faith,

hope, and charity, for gardens of flowers and nurseries echoing with spontaneous glee.

Jane Mertoun, like Tolstoi, carried the torch of truth and love. By day she moulded the prairie children in the Montessori way; repressing anger, jealousy, hate, passion, and avarice; developing culture, love, honour, and obedience. In Fife she had been moulding a parish; here she was moulding mixed races and the nation that is to be.

Quickly her eyes and ears detected the trail and the call of materialism, which always follow in the wake of sudden wealth. She also detected evidence of that parochialism harnessed by ancient enemies with a view to 'cutting the painter' and sawing up the British Empire by inches; but she did not worry about 'the ancient grudge' or newer grudges. 'Fifty below' swipes hate into a corner; the prairie air dispels the poison of the evil propagandist. Here and there was a bodyguard of great and good Canadians who had passed through the war; there were other Canadians who, like Colonel Dennis, had ridden with a gleaming sabre after the devils who inspired the rebellion led by Louis Riel. And over the iron rails of the C.P.R. swept yeomen from the dales, ploughmen

from the lowlands of Scotland, and crofters from the North. Valiant men with open faces, honest eyes, and giant hearts. Following were good, hardy women, eager for the opportunities of this fair Dominion, but still cherishing within their breasts the sentiment, the love, the old faith of the great homeland.

Jane Mertoun also found romance. The good schoolma'am out West has the social prestige of a queen. Character, however, is greater than all the artificial props around the social code. Jane Mertoun smiled, and her smile was infectious; it brought men forty or fifty miles in old corn wagons when a dance was on at the school. Her laughter, her innate charm, and, above all, her great sincerity, made her the idol of the ball. Beneath her schemes of pleasures was the scheme to raise the prairie folk. Thus she was wooed by men who hate the lights of cities and know the language of the flowers. But all were rejected. Her heart was with a young minister who rode the trail by night and by day, carrying the Gospel of God in the form of lint for the injured, china dollies for the bairns, and, for all, that charming simplicity which is the badge of nobility.

Six months passed.

‘You’re looking glum the day, Dugal,’ said Spud, on meeting his old friend at the station.

‘Trouble! . . . trouble! . . . trouble! D—— it! I’m gaun tae resign frae that School Board.’

‘You’ve got the best teacher in Saskatchewan.’

‘No’ noo. . . . No’ noo,’ said Dugal, shaking his head.

‘Whit’s wrang?’

‘She’s resigned. . . . Gaun tae wed the Presbyterian minister.’

‘I’m glad tae hear it,’ declared Spud. ‘She’ll shake us a’ up. We’re needin’ her kind in the kirk as well as the schule.’

‘I’m disappointed . . . disappointed,’ muttered the chairman. ‘She’s the sixth I’ve brocht tae the prairie, an’ they’ve a’ been nipped up afore I had time tae get a word in for mysel.’

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRACE-BOY FROM GLASGOW.

AT the Judgment Day there will be loud hosannas when the ex-Premiers of Canada appear before the Bar with the great Book in which is written Canada's work for Britain's slums. This is a story greater than the battle on the Heights of Abraham—nobler even than Canada's epic at Vimy Ridge. It is a pageant of Sympathy and Sentiment, and of heroic deeds against environment and prejudice—a pageant in which figure lion-hearted men like Sir John Macdonald, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Strathcona, Lord Shaughnessy, President Beatty, Sir George Maclaren Brown, Mr Bogue Smart, Mr F. C. Blair, Major Moore, and that noble veteran and Father of the Plains—Colonel Dennis of the C.P.R. These men have planned and worked like a band of brothers with those Britons whose names should be chiselled on our highways—Dr Barnardo, General Booth, Quarrier of the Bridge of Weir, and Dr Cossar of

Glasgow. While others have sought for Mammon and the baubles of the Palace, these men have laboured long for the children of the slums, only asking the help of the willing, evading all short-cuts to the approval of Parliaments, labouring on . . . labouring on . . . to the glory of God.

Let me pull the curtain aside.

At 7.30 A.M. on a raw spring morning—a time when all press and camera men are in bed or at breakfast—a well-built, kindly-faced young man, with the eyes and moustache of a Viking, is seen leading a number of Glasgow boys up the slope to St Enoch Station. Two months before, these boys had been milk-carriers, trace-boys, or ‘bag catchers’ at the railway stations—not the usual companions for a gentleman from Rugby, with a medical degree. But stay! Was not Arnold of Rugby the great missionary from Oxford—the man who grieved against cities and thundered on behalf of the poor? This Viking clambering up the slope was surely carrying on the great tradition of the famous Public School.

The boys were well clad—good caps, heavy tweed suits, strong boots, and British-warm

coats—and all carried old army kit-bags stuffed with woollen shirts, socks, &c. There were no tears, no loud laments as they entered St Enoch Station. They smiled—indeed, their faces beamed. And why? They were leaving the slums, the dark dead-end of the city—leaving the dingy close, smelling stair, and foul apartment in which were crammed parents, lodgers, and many helpless wee bairns. Such is the price we pay for the mistakes made by early City Fathers and Princees of Industry.

‘Tickets, please.’

The carriage door is closed and locked.

‘Good-bye, boys; . . . behave yourselves; . . . write to your mothers and me.’

‘Good-bye, sir,’ said the boys.

Conventional words these, but if you had heard the soft tone in which ‘Good-bye’ was said; if you had heard the veneration—yea, the adoration—in the ‘sir.’ Not the mechanical ‘sirring’ of the waiter or a footman, but the ‘sirring’ from boys whose hearts were melting at leaving that young man standing alone as the train moves out. He is waving his hand now; smiling, but in a pensive way, for he has detected emotion on the faces of the boys. . . .

The train is farther off; just as he turns away he hears a faint calling, 'Good-bye. . . . God bless you, sir.' The young Viking, suddenly embarrassed, hurries down the stairs towards Argyle Street, whence he makes his way to an East-end surgery, where he mends the blunders of a hundred years. Is this not a greater thing than Trafalgar or Waterloo?

Eight days of sea air, good fun, good meals, with extra lumps of plum-pudding passed to them by order of 'The Great Mackintosh' of the *Metagama*, and these boys are more fit. Too young to mope, not old enough to know about such things as the National Debt or Income-tax, they march down the gangway at Quebec full of beans, 'able tae take charge o' a cuddy, a coo, or a ferm.' Something in the Glasgow gamin's face always opens the Civil Service heart. The impertinent smile is alluring; officials, clergymen, nurses, and society ladies 'rush them.' 'The dear boys! . . . How cheerful they are. . . . Do give them more buns and tea. . . . Yes, we have got chocolates . . . that box there,' says a grand lady from old Quebec.

This is Canada's welcome. Canada wor-

ships bairns. Canada would cuddle and croon over the laddies from the slums.

The boys' advent had been heralded by this telegram:

Ten Glasgow boys arriving Wednesday. Inform their employers. Have autocars waiting. Do everything possible to ensure their comfort and happiness is the wish of President Beatty.—DENNIS (Colonisation Department).

As luck would have it, it fell to the lot of Spud Tamson to co-operate with the Colonisation Agent in distributing the boys to their prairie homes.

'What's your name?' Spud asked of a little chubby-faced chap with merry eyes and an 'impident' nose.

'Jimmy M'Kelvie.'

'Glesca, eh?'

'Ay.' And Jimmy grinned from ear to ear.

'What did ye dae in Glesca?'

'Trace-boy wi' Wordie. . . . Mebbe you'll mind o' me on the white horse—"Blin' Jessie"—the horse that sat doon amang the typewriters in a shop in West Nile Street?'

'I mind o' that. Where's "Blin' Jessie" noo?'

'They had tae sell her when I left

Wordie's. She wis a funny yin; ye had tae kid her on wi' bits o' breid an' bletherin' in her lug when she wis pechin' up West Nile Street. I could mak' her pull twa ton wi' haudin' a carrot an inch frae her nose and singing "Jessie the Flo'er o' Dunblane."

'What made ye come out here?'

'I got tired o' Glesca. . . . 'They're a' on "the dole" noo, but I want tae get on. An' there's nae room in oor hoose—ten folk for twa beds. Some o' them slept on the flair, an' I had tae doss on the dresser. I'm guid wi' horses, so I asked the Doctor tae get me tae Canada. . . . Jings! I cannae buckle my belt noo . . . ower much duff in the boat. . . . Did the Rangers win last week?'

'Ay,' said Spud, amused at his irrelevant chatter.

'Jings! There's a man walking ower the grass,' exclaimed Wee M'Kelvie, pointing to a farmer taking a short-cut across a paddock. 'Will he no' get the nick for that?'

'No' in Canada.'

'Help!' exclaimed the wee chap; 'there's a coo wi' a quilt ower its end. . . . Whit's wrang? . . . Consumption . . . or the bile?'

‘Jist a hap,’ Spud muttered.

‘Crikkey! that man’s horses havenae got shoes on. . . . Will he no’ get nabbed by the Cruelty Man?’

‘The grun’s saft; they dinnae need shocs.’

‘See! There’s a wummin plooin’ wi’ a couple o’ coos.’

‘Oxen—no’ coos,’ corrected Spud.

‘Can ye get milk frae them?’

‘Na!’

‘Mebbe they gi’e “Oxo,” the stuff ye get at the Tally-Wally’s in Glesca.’

‘The same.’

‘Is that the schule?’

‘Ay.’

‘Whit a lot o’ ponies. . . . Dis the Schule Board pay for the ponies? . . . A chap could easily jook the ‘Janny’ (Janitor) when attendin’ the schule. There’s a fat wummin wavin’ tae ye.’

‘That’s the Schule Teacher.’

‘Dae they a’ wave tae yin anither oot here?’

‘Ay.’

‘Ye don’t need tae be introduced, then?’

‘Jist if you’re a bad character.’

‘Have they got fleas in Canada?’ suddenly inquired Wee M’Kelvie after a glance at a farm.

‘Whit wey?’

‘There’s hair-nets in a’ the doors there.’

‘Ach! That’s tae keep the flies oot,’ said Spud.

‘Blue-bottles, eh?’

‘Whiles,’ replied Spud, almost demented.

‘I kent a man in Mulguy that kept a dog tae eat blue-bottles; could they no’ dae that oot here?’

‘I’ll see aboot that.’

‘Look! There’s a beast keekin’ oot o’ a hole in the road. Is it a seal?’

‘Na; it’s a gopher.’

‘Whit’s that?’

‘A cross between a ferret an’ a squirrel.’

‘Dis it eat men, or trees?’

‘Corn.’

‘Is its bairns in the hole?’

‘Ay.’

‘Hoo dae the wee yins get their meat?’

‘The faither brings it.’

‘Dis the mither no’?’

‘I dinnae ken.’

‘Are there ony ither wild beasts oot here?’

‘Coyotes.’

‘Whit’s that?’

‘The prairie wolves.’

‘Crikkey! Dae they eat men?’

‘Na; ye can chase them wi’ a stick.’

‘Is that yin?’ shouted Jimmy, pointing to something hopping over the trail.

‘Na; that’s a jack-rabbit.’

‘Can ye eat them?’

‘Ay.’

‘There’s anither beast,’ pointing to something disappearing down a hole.

‘A badger,’ said Spud.

‘Dis it bite?’

‘Ay.’

‘There’s a ferm. Is that where I’m gaun?’

‘Ay.’

‘Is the man nice?’

‘Oh ay.’

‘Will I get playin’ ma melodyin?’

‘Ay.’

‘He’s got ten horses, six coos, an’ a couple o’ dogs. Is that roon’ thing for keepin’ waater in?’

‘Na! that’s a silo,’ Spud informed him.

‘Silo!’ Wee M’Kelvie exclaimed, quite puzzled.

‘For storin’ cattle feed.’

‘Is it dry?’

‘Na; mushy.’

‘Wordie didnae hae that.’

‘Mebbe no’.

‘Is yon the man?’ M’Kelvie asked, as

the car drove up to the door and the farmer came out.

‘Ay.’

‘His troosers are tied up wi’ string. . . . Will I hae my troosers tied up like that?’

‘Come on! . . . Jump!’ replied Spud, who then turned to the farmer and said: ‘Here, Jack, is a nipper frae Glesca. He’s as wise as an owl, an’ as sharp as a deer. Gi’e him a go, an’ he’ll make good.’

‘Say, kid; I’m right gled to know you,’ said the Canadian, taking little Jimmy by the hand.

‘Gled tae meet ye, sir,’ was the little man’s reply.

‘Why, you’re as like our Dick as two peas. I guess you’ll want a right good meal after that long ride, eh?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Like apple-pie?’

‘Ay.’ And M’Kelvie grinned.

‘And a whole heap of pork, cabbage, and beans?’

‘Ay.’

‘Step right in, sonny. . . . Say, mother, here’s Harry Lauder. . . . Looks good, doesn’t he?’ patting Jimmy on the head.

‘Say, . . . I like your smile, sonny,’ and

the big-hearted woman bent down and kissed him.

Jimmy burst into tears; the first tears he had shed since he left Glasgow.

‘What’s wrong, my lad?’ asked the farmer.

‘You’re that kind. . . . I’m no’ used tae that.’

‘God bless you, my boy. . . . I love you for that. . . . We’ll be real good to you. . . . Come right in and have a good meal.’

Jimmy rubbed his eyes in a shamefaced way and walked into the dining-room, where he sat down to chicken, pork, potatoes, cabbage, apple-pie, and tea.

‘Feel good now, sonny?’ the lady asked him at the end of the meal.

‘I cannae buckle my belt.’

‘One up for Canada,’ she replied.

As Spud was leaving the farm that night the boy ran to the door and asked him to send the following post-card, addressed to Dr Cossar, Monteith Row, Glasgow:

Arrived safe. Got a fine place. Feelin’ happy. You’ve been guid tae me. I’ll no’ forget ye. I’m savin’ up tae bring my brother Johnny oot.—Yours respekfully,

JIMMY M’KELVIE.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GLASGOW HIGH SCHOOL BOY.

A NATION which is to endure and to impress its civilisation on neighbouring countries must recruit its population from the cultured as well as the peasant classes. Over a hundred years ago Canada called from the Highlands and Lowlands sons of chiefs and lairds, cottars and crofters too. These younger sons discarded the impediments of the feudal system, but retained the culture of the castle and the manse. The crofters and cotfolk rejected the *rôle* of serf and vassal, and became freemen in the colonial sense of the term. But between the two classes the bond of respect and friendship was retained; leadership was recognised, with the result that in the war of 1812, the rebellion of Louis Riel, and in the political troubles prior to the confederation of the Canadian provinces, there was a fusion of both classes, and a united front to enemies within and without the young Dominion. Unfortunately, this great ideal in settlement

has fallen off with the last twenty years. Canada, particularly Western Canada, has been recruiting its settlers mainly from the peasant classes of all nations; all good men and true, but in parts bereft of immediate contact with the code of manners and culture necessary to the progress and happiness of a new dominion. Good Canadians in western universities are working hard to remedy this defect, and wonderful work has been done, but they realise that their ideals can only be achieved by drafting immigrants from a higher stock, who, by example in speech, conduct, deportment, and public affairs, will create an aristocracy of culture, without which no nation can achieve immortality.

These thoughts were in the mind of Colonel Dennis as he motored through the prairie lands. He had surveyed these lands in the period when the red men were supreme, and millions of buffalo munched across the plains. Like Van Horne and Moberley, he had tramped with chains and theodolite ahead of the railway gangs. During the last forty years he had toiled to settle the plains, always keeping in view that, while Canada must recruit from all nations, the blood and the ideals of the British Commonwealth of

Nations must be supreme. The task was easier in the days of Sir John Macdonald and Strathcona. Modern politics, the telegraph, and old European vendettas hamper the work of great pioneers to-day. But his faith was undaunted, his determination more firm. Cost what it may, he would achieve his dream—the prairie fully settled with happy folk, and guarded from the menace of parochialism, dollar pride, and Tammany Hall. This day he saw success on the horizon. The car was sweeping past homestead after homestead, herd after herd of cattle, schools, churches, and community halls. But his shrewd eyes also perceived that the wealth of the prairies was not being sufficiently directed towards the creation of homes and families that will endure—families who in time will say, ‘We and ours have been here for over two hundred years.’ Dennis, unconsciously, craved for the touch of Old Devon and the Lowlands—in other words, a nation set in cement.

A red-coat came round the bend. Dennis stopped the car. ‘Good-morning, trooper.’

‘Good-morning, sir,’ said Spud, saluting smartly.

‘How are things here?’

‘Fine, sir.’

‘Farmers doing well?’

‘Oh ay. . . . Of coorse, they ha’e their ups and downs, like ither folk, but they’re weel aff; guid hooses, an’ every man a Ford car.’

‘Do they use their money well?’

Some dae; ithers dinnae ken the wey. For example, that man ower there’—pointing to a farm—‘is jist lousy wi’ dollars. He’s a grand fermer, but that’s a’. His idea o’ livin’ is buyin’ a new car every month, wipin’ his feet on the Turkey carpet, an’ hingin’ his brecks on the chandelier.’

‘Has he a family?’

‘One; as bonnie a lass as ever rode the trail. She’s at the University o’ Saskatoon; kens hoo things should be done, but the auld man’s a stubborn yin; likes his meat aff the deal board; nae time for table-cloths an’ fal-de-rals.’

‘These men made the prairie,’ Dennis remarked.

‘That’s true, sir; but, for God’s sake, gi’e us a touch o’ flo’ers an’ order.’

‘We’re trying that; Professor Lochhead is touring all the public schools in the Old Country. He has been in your country—to Glenalmond and Glasgow Academy. We hope to send here some nice boys, also ex-

public-school men, who might brighten the lives of the prairie folk.'

'A grand scheme, sir! If we had mair romance an' a touch o' style it would tak' the drab side oot o' the prairie. We cannae aye be talkin' about beasts an' crops; some o' the folk are hungerin' for a smack o' "The Bonnie Brier Bush," an' the smell o' roses. We'll no' keep folk on the prairie if life's tae be a' binders, milk-cans, an' seed calendars.'

'I agree. . . . I agree. . . . We'll send you some new types soon. . . . Look after them well.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said Spud in his kind way.

'You're a good policeman,' said Colonel Dennis, as the car moved off.

'And you're a grand Canadian,' was Spud's farewell.

Thanks to Professor Lochhead, Major Moore, and Major Hayward, the advance guard of good public-school boys arrived. The younger ones went to the Macdonald Agricultural College, Montreal, there to learn the Canadian ways and get Canadianised, after which they were to be distributed to the most comfortable homes in all parts of Canada. But the ex-public-school men

with little means made for the prairie, where the opportunities are greater. One named Gilly Wilmore, formerly of the Glasgow High School and late of His Majesty's Deeside Highlanders, tumbled out at the C.P.R. station which served Buffalo Horn Valley. Like all Glasgow men, his first instinct was for 'a coffee,' but 'Pie Craig' has no arty coffee-rooms out West. Wilmore, with a subdued grin, entered the shop of Wun Lung, a good Chinaman, who gave him a first-class omelette, also an apple-pie with café au lait, for fifty cents. 'Not bad,' mused this long-legged ex-officer as he went out of the door. Humping his bag on to his shoulder, he made for a livery barn to get a conveyance to go out to Bud Dawson's farm. On the way he saw Spud on patrol. The red coat sent a thrill through his veins; he was back to the army again.

'Where's Bud Dawson's farm?' he asked Spud.

'Twelve miles oot.'

'You're Glasgow all right,' said Wilmore, smiling.

'You bet. . . . Are you?'

'Ay.'

'Kelvinside . . . eh?'

'No; Newlands.'

‘Man, I’m gled tae meet ye,’ and Spud put out his hand. ‘Are you one o’ Colonel Dennis’s flock?’

‘Yes.’

‘Ex-officer?’ Spud said, after a survey of the alert figure.

‘Yes. . . . The Deeside Highlanders.’

‘Man, I was in the “Glesca Mileeshy.”’

‘Good lad. . . . But, tell me, who is this guy, Bud Dawson?’

‘The biggest fermer oot here . . . a bit rough, but one o’ the best. He’ll make ye work, though.’

‘I’m not afraid of that, if I get a chance to get on. I’m sick of an office after being through the war. But I might get cold feet at this game,’ he mumbled, as his eyes travelled over the wooden shacks and buildings that lined the street.

‘Nae fear. . . . I’ll take ye oot tae Bud Dawson’s. . . . I’ve a spare horse in the barn here.’

Wilmore mounted the spare horse, balanced his kit-bag in front, and loped over the prairie trail by the side of Spud. The horse revived the wander lust, a changing panorama aroused his interest; between spells of sight-seeing they talked about the Menin Road, Plug Street, So-and-So’s estaminet behind

Ypres; how the 'Glesca Mileeshy' filled the pawnshops with watches from the Prussian Guards, and how the Deeside Highlanders stole the rum from the Black Watch and fired 50,000 rounds of ball at a German patrol, which turned out to be a cheese rolling down the duckboards.

This was a happy introduction to the prairie, but the atmosphere changed on reaching Bud Dawson's farm. Wilmore's conception of colonial life had been culled out of the romantic pages of magazines, in which the Lost Legion move around in monocles, breeches, and spurs, and, when weary of well-doing, retire to a broad veranda on which is placed a small table with cigars, lemon-squash, and Highland Dew. Bud Dawson, however, was a farmer who left the veranda to the chickens, the garden to the pigs, the drive to a band of wild colts, and the house to a distracted wife and servant who had to feed many mouths; with the result that the sugar was where the potatoes should be, the fifty-pound gramophone rusting out-of-doors, silk blouses mixed with dusters, and a brand new motor-car tenanted by hens that laid eggs on the cushions and floor. Bud Dawson, a powerfully-built man, was stroll-

ing about in a pair of jeans which revealed part of his anatomy, and a shirt that appeared to have come over to Hastings on the back of a pioneer-sergeant in 1066. Mrs Dawson, of ample proportions, had a piece of binder twine round her cotton dress, just to hold things together and emphasise that, in the long ago, she *did* have the waistline of a girl.

Of course, this is not the way of Mayfair, Newlands, and Kelvinside. 'The best people' never reveal a part of their anatomy, or bind a buxom figure with a piece of string. But the more staid conventions of 'the best people' are sometimes a nuisance. Bud Dawson and his missus were immortals, great people who had wrested the bread of nations out of the virgin soil. Of course, they were careless of the wealth God had given them, but they really didn't know, and, in their own way, they were happy, very happy. And how they shook Wilmore's hand. The sincerity touched the heart of this ex-officer of the Deeside Highlanders. They were rough, but they were good, and inwardly he said 'it was a d——sight better than sticking one's nose on to the window of an unemployment bureau, or trying to sell bicycles in Birmingham or

granite in Aberdeen.' He went up the untidy stair to his room. On reaching the landing he saw the den of some one with an artistic instinct and ordered mind; he peeped into the empty sitting-room. Above the fireplace was the photograph of a beautiful Canadian girl in a university gown, and underneath was the signature—'Milly Dawson.' Wilmore scented romance, and vowed that all the horses in Canada or U.S.A. wouldn't pull him off that prairie farm.

One used to a batman, an electric bell, and dainty courses at meals takes badly with the more primitive routine of a prairie farm. 'It's nice to get up in the mornin', but it's better tae lie in yer bed,' as Harry Lauder sings. Wilmore had to get up in the morning and chase back to the barn a bunch of silly cows that *always* took the wrong turning. And the pigs! the darned things were always walking into the drawing-room to shove their snouts into the gramophone or chew the fifty-guinea rugs to bits. Milking a cow was like doing six months in Barlinnie; driving a six-horse team worse than being Secretary of a Women's Bazaar; and ploughing, plough-

ing, ploughing often made him pine for an aeroplane to get back to Gordon Street and drop into 'Pie Craig's' for a white coffee and a fag.

But this grouching was Wilmore's form of recreation. While he grouched he worked. He had pride of Regiment, Race, and School. The man who got the M.C. for leading a shattered regiment at Beaumont-Hamel was not going to be beaten by the stern tasks of colonisation. And God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. Bud Dawson admired his grit; Ma Dawson increased his weight from ten stone six to twelve stone four. In the fall of the year pretty Milly Dawson came home from the 'Varsity. When winter stopped work in the fields, Bud Dawson told Wilmore to chaperone the apple of his eye to every social function within fifty miles. Bud knew his man all right; there was nothing yellow in Wilmore; he was a credit to 'Daddy Hutchison,' Shirley Goodwin, and other good masters of the Glasgow High School.

Milly Dawson was a good Canadian, unconventional, full of initiative, proud of her race, able to ride a horse, milk a cow, bake apple-pie, and write an essay on the

influence of Emerson and Shakespeare. Though 'Varsity trained, she wanted to live on the prairie. The prairie had been good to mum and dad. Mum and dad, in their rough old way, had been more than good to her. But Milly, with the ordered mind of an intellectual, wanted to see more culture and beauty around the prairie farms. Like Colonel Dennis, she craved for a smack of Devon, a touch of Edinburgh, and a bit of Glasgow too. God never decreed that the chickens must always live on the veranda, the pigs in the garden, the colts in the drive, and the hens in the auto-car. Farming and culture are not inseparable, as many cynics allege. She knew she had to go up or go down in history as a woman who reverted to type. More important, Romance was calling. With Gilly, life on the prairie would be heaven; without him it might be hell. The culture of the old world mated to the strength and initiative of the prairie is the right ideal, and Canada's only hope of achieving immortality.

Thus the ex-officer of the Deeside Highlanders and the pretty Canadian girl formed a compact to make the roses grow, to create arbours from which dangled many-coloured

flowers, to keep the chickens in their coops, the pigs behind the wire, colts in the paddocks, and hens round the barn. Slowly, but surely, the house itself was transformed from a muddle of gramophones, seed calendars, torn breeks, dusters, and blouses to a beautiful prairie home, with the quiet air of the counties, and all the labour-saving appliances of Toronto and Montreal. Equally important is the fact that the education they had received enabled Bud Dawson to farm intensively, and so the balance-sheet went up. The aristocracy of culture had made good. Wilmore had reversed the ancient legend that, on the land, the public school boy is a fool.

One night old Bud Dawson came unexpectedly into the drawing-room. The young couple were sitting arm-in-arm. 'Say, you turtle doves, mum and I are quitting business. We're goin' to the Old Country for a holiday. The farm's yours, so I guess you'd better 'phone for the parson now.'

'Do you mean that, dad?' said the girl.

'Sure.'

'You're just lovely,' and she pulled his grizzled old face towards her, and kissed him reverently.

Wilmore, touched to the heart, put out his hand, and, in his quiet, manly way, said, 'You've been good to me. I will be good to her.'

'Say, Wilmore, I know that. You're a real good fellow. God bless you!' and the old man went out of the door with joy in his heart, and the mist of love in his eyes.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NURSE FROM 'THE WESTERN.'

IN the long story of colonisation, mainly written by men, there is little concerning the influence of women. The omission is not designed, but due to the old habit of men—acceptance of women's devotion as part of the routine of life; indeed, it goes further than that—right back to the pagan times, when women were beasts of burden, mere serfs to all mankind. But the honest man, who is a clear observer of the present and the past, knows that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world; and were it not that women are better than men—more true, more spiritual, more faithful to the little tiring, tedious duties of the day—this world would be topsy-turvy, chaos and savagery supreme. The courage, charity, and love of women form the sheet-anchor of our civilisation.

The defect of the Canadian who is enthusiastic about his country is the tendency to hurl into print a mass of statistics, such as the population of the old cow-town, the

millions of bushels of grain that pass a certain point in a given time, the miles of telephone wire that sweep the Dominion, and how many thousand years it would take a million people to drink the millions and millions of gallons of water in Lake Superior, &c. &c. This stuff is very American, impressive in its way, but evidence of lack of imagination and appreciation of the real story of Canada. Every homestead in Canada is an epic of faith, cheerfulness, and courage; but all we can get about such a homestead is the balance-sheet, number of cows per acre, and the quantity of stuff that was rammed into the silo in the fall. Meantime history lies forgotten. Only a few—and Ralph Connor is one—have troubled to dig up the glory of woman-kind. Think of the women of Pictou, Glengarry, and Red River. Women hurled from the glens of the north on to the then silent shores of Canada. With only a plaid for a roof, only their hands to gather the wild food of sea and shore, yet they carried on, silent, patient, uncomplaining. Not so long ago the writer stood in the old cemetery of Kildonan (near Winnipeg), viewing with tender eyes the headstones erected to noble Highland women who had passed through

fire, storm, shot and shell, yielding nothing, gaining the badge of quiet devotion, the white flower of a blameless life, and the traditional reward—*the silence of the grave!*

To-day, as in the past, women bravely carry on. But we never hear of them. The writer has seen their work and has heard their past. He has ridden hundreds of miles across the prairies of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, and he stands aghast at the blindness of many prairie men; at the stillness of many Canadian pens. Of course we have the sob stuff—the dramatic junk demanded by Los Angeles and the Yellow Press. That awful dope in which crime, passion, and the muckiness of things are artistically co-ordinated so that the mob can have their fill. Nothing about the plain things—patience in the long winter night when the stove is out and the baby ill; faith in the hour of darkness, when hail has slaughtered the harvest and put the home in pawn; charity to a husband who has been a fool, if not a scoundrel; courage when tempted to flee from the hardness, the misery of early pioneering days. Nothing of that gentle sweetness when a husband or child is smitten low. Nothing of that love of order and beauty which makes

Home Sweet Home. Nothing of the glory of Maternity and the glory of God which is in all women's souls. No, nothing! Just junk for Los Angeles, or statistics about millions of bushels of grain.

But one cannot touch the soul by writing of women in the style of a leading article. The form is cold, the rules of the game demand thunder, satire, and the funeral note. So let us get back to the nursery way—the story. This, then, is the story of Nurse Hamilton from the Western Infirmary, Glasgow. She was like most nurses, of the good, clean stock who have made us what we are. Not a Venus, nor a sparkling Diana. No, not divinely tall or with Madonna's eyes. These charms are the prerogatives of 'Serials Unlimited.' Nurse Hamilton was twenty-eight, short, strongly built, with an open, kindly face, and eyes revealing intelligence and sympathy. Her going to Canada was not entirely an altruistic affair. The old wander lust had seized her, and she would earn her bread at the calling she preferred. From men like Parry, Dalziel, MacEwan, and MacLennan she had gained that insight which gets to the root of anything from measles to appen-

dicitis, and in the Maternity Hospital she had found the secret of assisting little ones into the world without the horrors which haunt the imagination of many mothers before the coming of joy. She also had the courage to resist the lights of Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg—the lights that lure men from the plough and women from the homesteads, the trees, and the flowers. Like most nurses, she had the missionary instinct—the desire to help and brighten the world. Right out to the prairie she went. She would assist the People of the Plains.

When danger is near or help required the Mounted Police are always near. Donald Farquharson was much in need of help on the day that Spud Tamson was doing his rounds at the edge of his fifty-mile patrol. Farquharson was an Aberdeenshire 'loon,' tall, sandy-haired, blue-eyed—the old Viking breed; a ploughman from Deeside, where hard work is the rule and economy the basis of all plans. In ten years he won six hundred and forty acres into his own hand; won a bonnie lassie, too! a sweet girl from a white-washed croft where the rambler roses hang around the door. The woman of his dreams was housed in a pretty

homestead belted with tall poplar trees, making it a nook of comfort and romance; but this day there was anguish in the face of Farquharson. A little one was coming—something unexpected had occurred—the nurse engaged was still tied by other work—the doctor's car had broken down. Farquharson was in the throes of anguish and despair.

'Whit's wrang, Donald?' Spud inquired, on meeting him at the end of the trail which led to Farquharson's homestead.

'The lassie's bad; the doctor's car has broken down, and he has hurt his legs. We must hae a nurse here in a couple o' hoors, or I'll go mad!' he shouted.

'Steady, Donald, . . . steady. Dinnae lose yer heid. . . . I'll help you through.'

'Can you get a nurse?'

'I think so, . . . I think so,' but there was a doubt in Tamson's words.

'Are you sure?' demanded Farquharson, for the man was desperate with worry.

'I'm sure.'

'Where is she the noo?'

'Twelve miles frae here.'

'For God's sake gallop all the way!'

'I'll dae that,' said Spud, dismounting. He unbuckled his big greatcoat, the corn bag,

and holsters off the saddle, so as to lighten the horse's load. Remounting, he gave the animal the spur, and galloped furiously down the trail. Somehow that horse knew, for the good policeman never uses the spur unless as a signal that danger is at hand. Spud was maintaining the traditions of the force—the force which captured and has held the plains, guarding the weak, assisting the lame, and helping the fatherless. And he was galloping to help a woman in anguish, to assist the coming of love and joy to the homestead of as fine a couple as ever beat the trail.

‘Good lad, . . . good lad!’ whispered Spud into the faithful animal's ear. The horse stretched its neck out farther, increased its pace still more, till its hoofs cracked and cracked like cavalry in the charge. Farmers in their wagons made way, stray cattle galloped clear, as Spud flashed past on his errand of mercy.

Nurse Hamilton was busy in the homestead of Farmer Brown. That morning a little Canadian had arrived. The mother, pale but happy, lay cosy and comfortable; by her side was a little girl. All the terrors of imagination had vanished—joy had come.

A blue-eyed angel swathed in flannel lay by the mother's side.

'Oh! here's a red-coat,' exclaimed the nurse, looking out of the window. 'He's galloping furiously. . . . Whatever is wrong?'

'That's "The Mounted." . . . He wants you,' said the prairie mother, who could read the signs and sounds of the trail.

'Me!'

'Yes.'

'Is Nurse Hamilton here?' said Spud, as he dismounted at the door.

'Yes,' said the nurse, going out to meet him.

'We need you at the Farquharsons . . . it's life or daith.'

'What's wrong?' was the quiet inquiry.

'A wee yin's due.'

'A first baby?'

'Ay.'

'I'll come.'

'Can you ride?'

'I've never ridden, but I'll try.'

'The horse is ready,' said Farmer Brown, who had read the riddle of the galloping policeman.

'Thanks,' said Spud, as he took the nurse's bag. He lifted the nurse into the

saddle, and told her to go slow at first, so as to get accustomed to the stride of the horse. This was awkward for a girl who had never ridden before, but she gripped with her knees, set her teeth, and let the animal go. It was not a graceful performance, still it was a plucky one. It is easier for the amateur to gallop than to canter, so Spud made both animals go. Going round corners was the awkward bit, but the horse's neck was handy—to the neck she clung. It was no joke; indeed, it was most uncomfortable and rather undignified. No woman likes to appear as a helpless lump on a horse's back. But a life was at stake, and for a life a nurse will always do 'the impossible.'

'Is that Farquharson?' asked the nurse an hour later, as they neared a homestead and saw a panic-stricken man waving his arms.

'Ay, that's him.'

'You must get him out of the way; his state of mind will be a fearful hindrance.'

'Quick! . . . quick! she's dying,' roared Farquharson as they met him.

'Not at all . . . she will not die,' was the nurse's reply.

'She is!' yelled Farquharson, who did

not realise how excitement had upset his manners.

'Shut up, Farquharson! . . . And here! . . . Get on your horse, and ride into the township for a box of chocolates.'

'Chocolates!' said Farquharson, in a dazed way.

'Ay.'

'What for?'

'Never mind. . . . Dae whit you're telt.'

'I'll need tae bide here,' protested the distracted husband.

'Get on your horse, or I'll make you!' said Spud, looking him sternly between the eyes.

Farquharson, who was not quite normal, but sufficiently sensible to obey, walked to the barn for his horse and rode off to the township. Meantime the nurse had disappeared. She found Mrs Farquharson more terrified than dangerously ill. Imagination had let loose a thousand fears. The man, as is the way, had not helped matters. But the little nurse restored confidence with a smile, with a hypodermic syringe she eased the immediate pains, and in half-an-hour the room had the calm, well-ordered appearance of a hospital ward. Spud was impressed into her service as a ward-maid; he was kept busy

fixing the stove, boiling water, cleaning basins and all that was required by Nurse Hamilton in the other room.

Maternity work is not a bed of roses; there are many difficulties, often complications. The doctor's injury barred his coming, so the task was harder still. For a time the nurse had her fears, but these were hidden away. All Mrs Farquharson saw was a smiling face; all she heard was, 'Don't worry, my dear. . . . All's well, . . . you'll be all smiles in the morning.' Manner means much in the sick-room. Confidence is the most wonderful medicine; a ready brain and clean hands are tremendous assets when a crisis arrives. And there came a crisis—a tense, awkward moment when two lives hung by a hair. Nurse Hamilton had to do a job which is the prerogative of surgeons. But out West the rigid laws of the B.M.A. are often side-tracked; this was the land of pioneers—pioneers have to sink or swim.

Intuition told Spud Tamson what was going on behind the scenes. He scented the crisis, and wondered . . . wondered . . . what would be the verdict of the dawn. Contact with this nurse revealed the patience, sympathy, and courage of women. For hours she toiled, and without complaint. Spud

was fearfully excited, but the nurse was calm. The tiny details, the tedious routine of her work were not scamped. The law of anti-septics was rigidly enforced. After many hours of hard and exacting toil she appeared at the door all smiles, and with a lovely cherub in her arms.

'A boy! . . . isn't he lovely?' she said.

'A bonnie laddie,' muttered Spud.

Just then galloping hoofs were heard; this was Farquharson returning. The nurse put the baby beside the now sleeping mother, and went into the kitchen to set the table for a hearty meal. Spud went out of the door to meet the father.

'I've got them! . . . I've got them!' shouted the horseman, waving a box of chocolates as if they had some really serious connection with the case.

Spud burst out laughing.

'What are you laughing at?' demanded Farquharson.

'You mind me o' the man that wis in the wey when a wee yin was comin' into the world, and the nurse made him carry buckets o' waater a' through the nicht.'

'Is a' weel?' replied Farquharson, realising the joke, and appreciating the origin of the same.

'Ay, . . . a boy, . . . as bonnie a bairn as ever was born on the prairie.'

'Thank God!' was his only utterance. Entering the house, Farquharson had a peep at the little newcomer, and the pretty mother asleep, with a smile of content on her features.

'Come, now, and have a meal,' said the nurse, closing the door and leading them to a table spread with the good food of the prairies. The God-fearing Aberdonian bowed his head, and said, 'O God, for the bonnie bairn Ye have sent, for the kind folks wha have helped its comin', for the dear lassie noo oot o' pain, and the good food before us, we are truly thankful. . . . Amen.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CALGARY STAMPEDE.

CALGARY is 'the old cow-town,' as it was called in the days of the pioneers, when all was primitive and the surrounding plains were tenanted by herds of cattle in charge of cowboys, mainly remittance-men with a monocle and a thirst. The cowboy and the horse were kings of the prairie then; only those who could bust a broncho or rope a steer were welcome in the shacks and saloons. Hard old days, but happy old days. The days of men, hard swearing, hard bitten, but void of the yellow streak; white to the core, and, though wild and foolish in their cups, always chivalrous to good women, and brave guardians of the halt, the maimed, and the blind. Those were the days of romance, when right was might, courage supreme, and patriotism the creed of all. The 'Old Country,' when mentioned, always roused the emotions of the cowboys of the plains.

But Calgary has been transformed from a cow-town to a city. Where the cattle munched at eve and cowboys galloped around

is now a network of streets, buildings, railways, tram-lines, and telegraph poles. A beautiful lay-out, a fit doorway to the grandeur of the Rockies, also a splendid host to visitors to the plains; but *not* the old cow-town. Progress has its lures and many, many charms; but pioneering and pioneers have ten thousand charms. There is dash and colour about a cowboy! there is none in the man clad in a standardised suit, with gold in his teeth, six pencils sticking out of his top pocket, a waistbelt around a too corpulent 'tummy,' and a thirst for ice-cream and omelettes—the soft food of tenderfoots.

The heart thrills at the sight of a lean, hard man, with good jaws, keen eyes, and long legs gripping the sides of a fiery steed. There is judgment, nerve, and daring in the man who can head off a mad stampede and rope a steer with eyes that blaze, a neck and horns that could toss man and horse sky-high. But that man's son in a fifty-dollar suit, with a crease in his trousers that would cut a cake, and a bow in his collar that only women should wear, is labelled a 'Cissy' by the old pioneers, who have a reasonable hate of the ten-cent dude, whose heroes are on the films and whose adventures are staged

in red-light saloons. The 'Cissy' is an encumbrance, with no basis for his pale-faced superiority. The Red Indian and the pioneer are the only persons who have established a claim to be superior persons.

And we miss the prairie schooners (ox wagons) that once trundled through the streets, carrying a hardy brood who could get fire from flint, make homes and clothing out of hides, lure a buffalo to the larder, and catch a wild horse with their wits. Of course it is more comfortable to have a five-cent ride in a street car, or turn the wheel of a Ford. It is a hundred times easier to press a bell for a meal or wine. And we all revel in the bed that is soft, the netting that keeps off the flies, and the wonderful food that comes in boxes and tins. Progress, however, brings decadence in the form of indigestion, false teeth, nursing homes, mental hospitals, and an early grave. Civilisation is killing us by inches. No wonder the pioneer of eighty and ninety years of age stalks past the doors of ten-roomed villas with a contempt for all the tricks of Edison, the food of canneries, and the pale-faced men who cannot bend to tie their boots, and choke their lungs with huge poisonous cigars. This conflict between pioneers and moderns is a

feature of the West. Both sides can show claims for a benediction from the Lord; but the 'Cissy' will always be ruled out of the scroll of MEN. In a good public school he would be well ragged, and in the army of Wellington—'shot at dawn.'

And so the old westerners would ever remind us of the great old days. Each year, in the month of July, the Annual Exhibition has a feature called the Calgary Stampede. This is one of the great shows of Canada, and its merits are broadcasted in all kinds of type as follows:

It's

WILD!

WOOLLY!!

WESTERN!!!

WHOLESOME!!!!

• Would you see with your own eyes a truthful picture of the early West of pioneer days, as well as the up-to-date progress of to-day?

• Would you care to witness the "going back" for a week of a thriving modern city of 70,000 population to the range "cow-town" of some forty years ago?

‘Would you care to see a genuine Hudson’s Bay Company trading-post, built of logs, surrounded by a genuine Indian encampment of over a hundred painted lodges and tepees, Red River carts, prairie schooners, round-ups, cow-outfits, with their chuck-wagons, &c., all engaged in the actual life of the early day period; trading, camping—in fact, living the life of forty years ago, exactly as it was lived then, and is still lived in some western localities?

‘See the most noted of all famous organisations, whose motto, “Maintain the Right,” has been one of the greatest assets in the settling of the great North-West—the honoured body known as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police? Would you be interested in seeing the sports of the cowman and the cowboy, the Indian, the packer, the prospector, the stage-coach driver? such as broncho-busting, both with saddle and bareback; calf-roping, riding of wild range cows and steers, wild cow milking, handling of wild horses and wilder cattle, chuck-wagon races, California cart races, democrat races, Indian races, squaw races, Indian tepee races, pack races, fancy and trick riding and roping, famous wild horse race; in fact, every kind of an amusing, thrilling he-man

sport known to the frontier West; participated in by the genuine inhabitants of the West, not as a "show," but as a genuine competitive tournament, where the winners receive thousands of dollars in cash purses, valuable and handsome trophies and official championship titles, including the beautiful trophy presented by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. If so, *Calgary extends a welcome you'll never forget.*

No wonder Spud Tamson applied for leave to go to the Calgary Stampede; indeed, he had been in training for months. He disguised himself in mufti and journeyed to town with a bunch of hayseeds (farmers), whose great holiday is to this annual exhibition. Of course there is a certain amount of tomfoolery about this affair. It is a bit of a joke to see the whole population of Calgary rigged out as pioneers. Men who have courted elevators, typewriters, motor-cars, and ice-cream saloons hardly look the part of old-timers. Still, the fun is good, and beneath it all is the serious worship of romance, a seeking for the heroic, and, on the part of the best people, an honest wish to pay reverence to the old pioneers.

Spud Tamson found the streets alive with

cowboys, cattle-rustlers, rum-runners, he-men with pop-guns in their belts, Montana sheriffs in tail-coats and Wesleyan jack-boots, horses tame and wild, cattle going mad with the sight of red shirts and small boys in the matador business. A cosmopolitan crowd dominated by the personality of the real Westerners, Red Indians, and the old pioneers. The pale faces of the moderns contrasted strangely with the sun-tanned features of the red men with feathers in their hair, blankets round their shoulders, and the deportment of kings. Once the lords and hunters of the plains, now only pensioners of the invaders. Solemn, proud, and sad! the last links with the arrow and the spear, the remnant of roving tribes, in which every man *was* a man, with the figure of Apollo, the courage of the lion, and the alacrity of the deer. Superior persons, with only a smile for the Mounted Police, who have been their guardians and loyal friends; who have never doped them with rum; never took their lands for a gun and twopence worth of beads; never sullied their women; and, in the hour of pain and woe, have often ridden hundreds of miles in dog-sledges for medicines for the red men. This bond of love and fellowship is one of the beautiful traditions out West; it wipes out

the knavery of rum-runners, the greed of factors, and the memories of statesmen who never understood the red men of the plains.

Behind them marched the Old Pioneers. Noble men and lovely women, whose gray hairs and wrinkled skins added to their charms. Men of the breed of Dennis, Perry, M'Leod, Sanders, Oliver, Worsley, Wroughton, Moberley, Sandford, Fleming and Co. Tall, tight, and trim with the scars of war; with eyes that had seen the prairies alive with buffalo and the panoply of war. Every man and woman a fit subject for a thousand pages of romance, romance without the dope or the amours of Broadway and Leicester Square. Pioneering is also a cleansing process. The man with the gun, shovel, axe, and plough has always around him Nature, godlike and eternal. Flowers that sweeten, trees that speak of the silence and work of a hundred years; mountains that have sheltered bear, wolf, and mountain lion since the Flood; rivers that have roared and wrestled through deep canyons, undermining mountains and throwing the debris down as we throw away a match. And the plains! Once so vast, alone, full of haunting tragedy and mystery! These plains had been found and tamed by the pioneers. No railways then!

In laborious prairie schooners they had traileed from the St Lawrence to the gateway of the Rockies. Women like Mrs Perry, wife of Colonel Perry of the Mounted Police, had faced the journey with the men. No cushions. No tinned dainties. No thermos flasks. Hard biscuits and the red meat of the buffalo. The food of heroes ! With such traditions, with such living representatives of our beautiful and glorious race, how is it that Canada permits vulgarians to produce fiction in which are glorified the escapades of the concubine and the superficial piffle of tyrants behind telephones, whose mock heroics, among piles of dollars, are fit meat only for drunk cartoonists seeking for cheap refreshment. All this is not a condemnation of the present, but it is a hint to all Canada that in the traditions of its fathers there is the key of happiness and prosperity. There is also the lesson that the old pioneers loved and still love the Motherland far more than the city youth to-day. They won and made the West worth while. They would people it with our ancient race. While they love and respect the good alien who will work and salute the flag, they view with pain-filled eyes the schemes of low-bred men, soft men with a gift of

intrigue and treason; men who court the hustings, but who recoil when the bullets CRACK! And these men, for power, and because of some petty grudge, would block the gateway from the old land, and open the sluice for a cosmopolitan horde who would swarm into cities and become tools of treason and revolt. Let the recent miniature revolution in Winnipeg be a lesson for all. Britain may be stupid, and has often blundered, but Britain has given its gold; better still, it gave the old pioneers. In a crisis that good blood, their fine example, has always come out on top. We have seen that in the Boer War, and who shall forget Vimy Ridge in the Great War? The moral of all this is that they who would have Power can have it—sceptre, armaments, and all; but to them the Spirit shall be denied. The Spirit of the Motherland is invincible and often unseen. The Spirit never sleeps. It watches with amused interest the cards of all. It yields . . . yields . . . yields . . . appears to resign its all, but the trump is always in its hand, and when the stage seems set for the tragic finale, down falls the ace, iron doors burst asunder, a bugle sounds the long reveille, and from out of the very gardens of the wily leaps the flaming sword.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE 'STUPID' ENGLISHMAN.

SPUD entered into the spirit of the Stampede with his usual enthusiasm. One item interested him greatly—that was 'Riding the Wild Horse from Montana.' This animal was owned by Nick Cuteye, a tough-looking gentleman who had spent his years in cattle-rustling and broncho-busting. In appearance he was tall, lanky, dark-haired, with a face that seemed a cross between that of a damaged pugilist's and a half-doped Chink. But he had legs that could grip 'any gaw-damned horse in U.S.A.,' as he explained to the crowd; and he reckoned his hands could throttle the life out of a fifty-ton elephant, never mind a four-legged lump of beef. He had the goods of the show—'Bucking Bill, the wild horse of Montana, guaranteed to throw any son of a gun to the angels, then drop him right down to the gates of ——.' The animal looked the part: it had long legs that trembled with devilry, a body as sleek and slippery as that of a snake or a seal,

while its eyes and ears told the tale of a temper that would put the wind up Daniel, even terrify the corpse of Buffalo Bill. With its ears back, its teeth showing, and the white of its eyes looking sideways, there arose in the minds of many the maxim of 'Safety First,' and the price of an 'all-in' insurance policy. The cowboys around declared 'it was the wickedest lump of itchy horseflesh that ever mushed corn,' and they reckoned, guessed, and calculated that it had 'put more men into six feet of mush than all the man-eating guys in Fiji.'

But a couple of glasses of bootlegged wine changed the scene. 'Safety First' vanished into the air. What hastened it was the picturesque language of Nick Cut-eye, who tormented the onlookers with references to 'the milk-fed ginks scared stiff at the sight of Bucking Bill . . . too gaw-damn tame to ride a wooden horse, never mind the bucking bit of man-chucking horseflesh from old Montana. Why, over the line (the border) they had ten thousand cow-punchers who could ride he-lions and mad bulls, and any gum-chewing kid over there could handle Bucking Bill with a lump of ten-twine round his nose.' In his opinion 'the Stampede was all graft to get

the dollars out of tomato-faced hayseeds and ten-cent cow-punchers, who knew as much about horseflesh as a chicken knew about ale.' The bosses of this five-cent outfit had boosted the show in all the parlour cars and squash saloons of U.S.A., and he (Nick Cuteye) had come 'right there with the good-goods'; he was 'standing right here looking for a He-Man in the land of the Maple Leaf; but the whole bunch of pumpkin-headed hobos hadn't the nerve to throw a leg over Bucking Bill. Say, you mummy-faced guys from grain-mushing homesteads, you're the tamest bunch of chickens that ever strayed out of coops.'

'Have a banana!' interjected a cowboy who had dined well, but not wisely, and whose accent was reminiscent of Harrow or Eton.

'Guess I'd sooner have a cocktail.'

'You'll jolly . . . well—hic—pay for it.'

'Sure. . . . Guess I've the dollars as well as the horse.'

'The beastly nag is doped—hic—with cayenne,' said the cowboy, who was swinging on his legs.

'Say, friend, don't you libel me? I ain't no horse doctor.'

'You're a beastly fakir—hic—eh what?'

'Kid! Cease firing your stuff at me.'

'Look here, my deah fellow,' said the cowboy, seizing Nick's lapel for support. 'You can't rattle me. . . . I'm awful good-natured—hic—don't you know! I like your wicked old face. . . . You're a real son of a gun, and as crooked as they make them—hic—in Montana. I'd give my quarterly remittance to have your voc—hic—abulary. It's jolly good. . . . I like your damned cheek too. . . . Awfully plucky—hic—chucking your sauce about. But don't lose your rag, old boy, when I want to give you a banana. . . . It isn't done, you know . . . *you dear old thing*,' and he stroked Nick's wicked old face. 'My Aunt Matilda would love to hear . . . you—hic—swearing in the rectory. You're just the sort of fellow the vicar would like to have at the village cookee-shine. . . . Aren't you lovely!' and he pulled Nick's ear. 'You're better than the stalls at The Garrick. . . . I'd love to get tight with you—hic—and give you a thick ear—for fun.'

'Say, friend,' said Nick, who was now all smiles, 'I ain't a lady in Broadway. . . . You can't smoodge with me.'

'You priceless old thing. . . . But let go—hic—that bally old nag. . . . If I can't

ride the beastly thing, I'll give you a tenner . . . eh what?'

'Guess you're canned. . . . Wouldn't be a square deal on you. . . . He's a white-livered guy, and wouldn't be too good to you. . . . I'd hate like h—— to see a white man like you having your head mushed.'

'My dear old thing, one — hic — must keep up one's end. . . . I'm not awfully good at sitting Montana nags, but I'll have a shot. . . . Come on, Willie,' he said, pulling Nick's arm. 'Get off these bally ropes. . . . I'm not really worried about Bucking Bill. It would be rotten bad form for me to let you go home. . . . Come on, Willie!'

'Give it a go, then!' exclaimed Nick, walking towards Bucking Bill, who was being held by a couple of cowboys.

'All clear?' demanded the Englishman; and before Bucking Bill knew what was happening, the long, lean, and apparently incapable cowboy had leaped from the ground and was in the saddle. Back went the ears, the nostrils distended and blazed red, the back was arched, legs drawn in, then up went Bucking Bill in the air. He landed on his fore-feet, then shot out his

hind-legs, but 'The Hon. Arthur' was still on his back. He tickled the horse with his spur, and away it went like a mad foal. 'The Hon. Arthur' had a grin on his face as he tightened the rein and dug his knees into the saddle. Bucking Bill, true to his breed, stopped suddenly, and *up* into the air once more, down, and out went the hind-legs again — again — and again, but Arthur was *still* on. Another tickle of the spur, and Bucking Bill went for another infuriated gallop. His ears were now flat, the white of his eyes more white, and the tail was the signal of his desperate mood. Bucking Bill had never been beaten, and it was obvious that he was going to have no more sauce from the gent in the saddle, who had libelled the Montana breed. But the Hon. Arthur knew the Dishonourable Bill. Each thought that ticked in Bill's head was ticked through the reins into the hands of the cowboy. When Bill stopped short, twisted fore and aft to no purpose, and then fell to the ground in the tricky old way, meaning to roll the Hon. Arthur into a jam-roll, silly old Bill got the surprise of his life. Arthur, like a good cowboy, simply cleared his feet from the Mexican stirrups, put the right leg on the ground, and hopped

off like getting off a bus. With his left foot he gave Bucking Bill a quick prod on his stern, saying, 'You beastly old hog . . . go home!'

Nick, who was really a good fellow, took the victory of the Hon. Arthur like a man. Bucking Bill, however, was put out of the show, as he had ceased to be 'a draw.' Arthur, out of mischief, then joined hands with Nick to draw the crowd for broncho-busting with a couple of desperate-looking nags, which were also part of Nick's outfit. When Nick was hoarse with enticing, abusing, and libelling his customers in the picturesque Montana way, the Hon. Arthur, from a soap box, harangued the crowd. 'Come on, you fellows. Nick's a sport, even if he is a rude old thing. He's got a couple of priceless nags here; they're as wicked as Eve and as itchy as tramps, but, by Jove! they're full of pepper and beans. Good stuff, eh, Nick?'

'Yep!' said Nick, now devouring a 'hot dog' (sausage roll).

'Their fathers were mad and their mothers the same; they're as crooked as Cain, and can bounce like balls. It's bad form, don't you know——'

'Switch off!' was the rude remark of an observer, obviously one of those who abhorred the public-school man.

'Have a chocolate!' was the casual retort of Arthur, which raised a roar of laughter.

'You're an ass!'

'Don't bray. It gives you away, old man.'

'I'll lay you out!' roared the man.

Nick flung the remainder of his 'hot dog' away and stalked forward, exclaiming, 'Say! you squint-eyed hobo, it gives me a pain to hear you giving your back-chat to a real good fellow. You ain't no cowboy, or a good Canuck either. Shove off, kid, and get ten cents o' ice-cream into your quick-lunch corporation.'

'You're a crook from over the line!' exclaimed the intruder.

'Get!' declared Nick, 'or I'll make your nose like a Jap's and your eyes like balloons.'

'Don't quarrel, Nick, old boy; it isn't really worth while. Life's too short,' said the Hon. Arthur, coming forward.—'Look here, old man,' taking the stranger by the arm, 'you come and have a drink in my tent over here.'

'I don't want——'

'You've simply got to,' and Arthur

seized his arm and away they went, the stranger expostulating, but Arthur all smiles. The Hon. Arthur took his protesting guest into a tent, where he dug a flask out of a holster. 'Say when.'

'Stop! . . . stop! . . . that's plenty,' said the stranger, taking the glass.

'Best of luck, old man!' and Arthur raised his glass.

'Same to you,' and the stranger smiled as he raised his glass to his lips.

'And now, old man,' said the Hon. Arthur, as he put his glass down, 'why did you make a row with me?'

'Guess I've never loved the English swell,' was the embarrassed reply.

'But, my dear fellow . . . I'm a cowboy, not a swell.'

'Sure! but you're one of them.'

'Have they ever harmed you?' said Arthur, putting his hand in a fatherly way onto the other's shoulder.

'Eh. . . . I guess not.'

'Then why grouse?'

'H——! I don't know!' was the honest reply.

'And I'm hanged if I do,' said Arthur, smiling. . . . 'It isn't cricket, is it?' handing him a cigar.

'I guess not. The Ancient Order of Hold-Ups have made it a tradition here.'

'Exactly.'

'But you're a good fellow,' added the stranger.

'I don't matter a damn. . . . But I hate to see on a board or a man's face: "No Englishman need apply!"'

'You're *in*,' said the man, lighting his cigar.

'But why are we not *all* in?'

'They would be, if they were all like you.'

'Many are better, much better. The fact is, we are mute, rather stupid in a battle of wits, and, unlike the Irish or the Scots, have no enthusiastic propagandists. You people simply do not understand us.'

'That may be true, but I reckon it's up to them to deliver "the goods."'

'We have done that over forty years ago.'

'I don't get you,' said the stranger.

'By the Act of Confederation. . . . We gave you all Canada. So you won't mind me getting twenty dollars a week as a cow-puncher.'

The stranger's eyes opened wide; the light

had dawned. Into his soul flashed the thought that he had been wickedly blind and horribly unfair. He put out his hand in a manly way and said, 'Say, friend, I'm real sorry. . . . You've turned the scales all right, and I guess we've a mighty big debt to pay.'

'Not a debt, old man.'

'What then?'

'Only a small interest.'

'How shall we pay it?'

'By helping the Old Country in its hour of misery and woe. Wouldn't it be an awfully nice thing if some persons got rid of that unfortunate frame of mind summed up in "No Englishman need apply," and did the right thing by substituting "All Englishmen should apply"?''

'Yes. . . . I'll write Ottawa.'

'Good man!' exclaimed Arthur, handing over his card:

THE HON. ARTHUR —

ROCKY RIVER RANCH.

THE CARLTON CLUB,
LONDON.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONFIDENT SCOT.

WHEN the Hon. Arthur and his new-found friend returned to the ring they found Nick Cuteye in a bad way. The trouble really was the amazing variety of attractions at the Stampede, which limited the number of available entrants for Nick's events. Poor Nick was competing with showmen of his own mettle, men who could jaw a nigger parson out of business. These men were bawling their good-goods through megaphones, to the annoyance of the unhappy horse-wizard from Montana. Nick's only relief was original abuse, and he was letting go as his friends arrived. 'Say, you sons of Isaac, Jacob, Fife, and Aberdeen, you're as tight in the fist as a blue-nosed Nova Scotian. Seems to me your dollars are sewn in your pants. Back home you feed on credit, and mince the storekeeper's bills to make feed for the fowls. All you guys come here for is to get free samples of oatmeal, chewing-gum, and tractor oil, and to pick up coloured

advertisements for machinery outfits for a fool of a banker to buy, and you to use so as to pack the dollars into your boots, and die of hunger in your wind-riddled and rain-splattered homes. If U.S.A. had this fine country of yours, why, we'd shake your old Puritan figures up and civilise your heathen homes with the good-goods from over the line. I've been on the stump since the cock crowed the sun up, and all I've got is twenty-five dollars. In old Montana I figure it out I can make a hundred dollars a day; but you're all so tight, or so darned scared of my nags from Montana, that all you do is to stand around and get educated without paying a cent for your keep.'

'Say, Nick, you don't call them horses?' said a homesteader.

'Yes, sir. Why, them two nags are the lineal descendants of the horse that George Washington rode when he knocked the feet from the red-coated guys from the Old Country.'

'Guess they need dipping or some flea-powder.'

'That's the sign of the real Montana nag. You can't expect a broncho to have the skin of a seal or the tail of an Arab.

They're the good-goods with the pep of tigers and a death-warrant in every kick. They can arch their backs like a cat when meeting a mad dog. I guess they can jump half-way to the moon and throw you and your hundred-dollar teeth right home.'

'Give them some corn,' suggested a cowboy.

'The good broncho is no tenderfoot; no, sir. These nags are off the range where they eat the man-killing grass of U.S.A. Over here you give your ponies colic with all the darned mush out of your ten-cent silos.'

'Standardised and advertised.'

'Yes, sir. If you had the brains to advertise your goods like me, I guess you could have a cigar instead of a free tooth-pick in your mouth.'

'But business is slow, Nick; isn't it?'

'Yep, . . . darned slow! I reckon this part of the world's been settled with a bunch of hard-faced Scots who feed on the psalms and die in a friend's house to save the expenses of a medicine man and the price of a candle to look for the dollars sewn in their jeans. I once lived in Nova Scotia, where they feed hens on illustrations of pop-corn, bean-meal, and candy.'

‘Ach awa!’ said Spud.

‘That language is new to me, sir. If you’re the guy that’s putting Esperanto over in this town, I guess you’d better move on, for I’ve no time for anything but the good English that my people humped over in the *Mayflower*.’

‘Nane o’ yer lip.’

‘I don’t get you.’

‘D’ye no’?’

‘No, sir.’

‘What do *you* ken about the Scots?’

‘All I know is that a man from Aberdeen once borrowed a horse from me; he came back and said he’d lost it, and asked for another to go and round it up. I’ve never seen that guy since.’

‘But I’m no’ frae Aiberdeen.’

‘Where do you hang around?’

‘Glesca.’

‘That’s where I got bunions looking for a “Scotch” on a Sunday.’

‘It’s a peety ye didnae get the nick.’

‘That’s Greek to me, old son.’

‘That’s Glesca!’

‘It’s worse than the lingo of the dago or the mystery-mush of the Jap. My people have been in U.S.A. since the *Mayflower* bumped this continent, and I reckon our

schools must be mighty good when every man in this crowd can understand what I am talking about; but you, sir, ought to be compelled to walk around with an interpreter.'

'President Wilson came frae near Glesca.'

'Sure; but he told me that his people fled from a lingo that would drive a Philadelphia teacher of elocution insane.'

'But you speak through your nose.'

'Yes, sir; but I was born down east, near to Nova Scotia, where we were fed on the fish caught by asthmatic Nova Scotians. And the breath of those guys made the air so darned sniffy that ever since America has been penalised with epidemics of nasal catarrh, which spoils the speech of gentlemen of U.S.A.'

'You're no' a gentleman,' declared Spud.

'Back home I'm Colonel Nick Cuteye of the National Guard.'

'Colonels in America are like flees on the wa'. I heard o' wan that went on parade wi' his spurs upside doon an' his sword rammed doon the leg o' his brecks.'

'I'm from Montana, where every man can riddle a carcass at a hundred yards, and ride a broncho without the saddle. And

say! it was me that pumped a couple of guns into Wango-Bango, the great He-Man of the Blackfeet Indians, who used to scalp every darned policeman he met in Alberta.'

'You've been readin' *Buffalo Bill*.'

'I guess I'm his successor.'

'Wis he no' proved a liar?'

'All great men are liars.'

'You're great then.'

'Sir, I'm known from San Fran' to the Straits of Belle Isle.'

'Ay; I've seen your name in the *Gazette*.'

'Sure, I'm in every paper in U.S.A.'

'I mean the *Police Gazette*.'

'Yes; I once got mentioned for capturing a couple of Scotsmen stealing the breath off a Prohibition officer, who'd been cataloguing a cargo of Mountain Dew.'

'But this was a mention in despatches for stealin' a couple o' nags frae a rancher.'

'I guess it takes a clever man to do that in Montana. If you can rustle a couple of bronchos with teeth that can nip a pound o' steak out of your pants and a kick in the hind- or fore-feet that can fracture your anatomy, I guess you'd be entitled to the nags.'

'You brag too much about your horses; there's wee Canadian laddies in Alberta that could ride them without a saddle an' a bit of string.'

'You're mighty slow in having a go.'

'I don't want tae hurt them.'

'Seems to me you'd be safer in a quick-lunch saloon than broncho-busting. Never yet seen a Scotsman who could ride a real horse. Their legs are like hams; they can't grip; and they're all so scared about leavin' the women or the whisky that they take no chances. . . . Ca' canny! . . . Yep!'

'You fancy yoursel'.'

'Yes, sir.'

'High heid-yin in the horse business?'

'Yep.'

'Superior tae "The Mounted"?'

'Sure.'

'Never lost a dollar at the game?'

'Except when a Scottie was the bookie on the job.'

'I'll bet you a hundred dollars that I'll ride your best broncho for thirty meenits; after that I'll take the saddle off and pick up a hankie three times at the gallop.'

'I'm yours!—Say, kid,' shouted Nick to one of his assistants, 'get "Mad Willie"

ready. Here's a candidate for the Heavenly Home.'

Spud flung off his jacket and vest, which revealed a jersey stamped 'R.C.M.P.' Nick was surprised, but hiding his fears about the hundred dollars, he held 'Mad Willie's' head till Spud leaped into the saddle—and then the fun began. Spud was rather too confident at first, inclined to be careless with reins, grip, and balance, and addressing 'Mad Willie' as 'a Rothesay cuddie'; but a fearful buck with fore-feet and back-feet, all grouped, gave Spud the shock of his life. By a miracle he kept his seat; then, tickling the horse with the spur, he made it go, on the sound principle that when running there's less bucking. There followed the most amazing series of antics seen that day. At one moment 'Mad Willie' was up on his hind-legs pawing the air like a pugilist, and meaning to fall back and crush the rider. But Spud leaned forward; with one hand round the horse's neck and with a switch in the other, he tapped 'Mad Willie's' Little Mary, which made the brute drop his fore-feet to the ground and gallop on again, shaking his head like a terrier shaking a rat, then making side-leaps to left and right, like a cat as it

plays with a mouse. This broncho typified the West—young, free, undisciplined, and scorning the reins of power. In every movement was hatred of the advancing East, with all its gewgaws of so-called civilisation. The broncho's forebears, like the Indians, were once the fleet lords of the plains. Thus they despised the men who would saddle, bridle, and snaffle them too. The Indians had always ridden them without the saddle, in some cases without a rein, directing their movements with pressure of the knees and a whisper in their ears; but the Pale-faces gave them saddle sores with cumbrous contraptions, so that they (the riders) could sit in comfort and ease. 'Mad Willie's' protests were surely justified. God had given the bronchos wide ranges covered with succulent herbage to eat; rivers and brooks in which to swim and bathe; miles and miles of flat courses to romp and do the 'Derby' in; but now all was changing. Fools (so the bronchos said) had fenced the land. Out of trains cattle were poured, and these had multiplied. The bronchos had not only been robbed of their heritage, but trapped into the job of cattle-punching, and at the command of Pale-faces who spoke the language of cities—

men of Oxford, Cambridge, London, and 'Glesca' too. No wonder 'Mad Willie' snorted with rage and vowed to kill the man on his back. Still, this horse knew he had no tenderfoot with the reins. This man with the red hair, who was calling him a 'tow-heided man-chower,' had been at the game of broncho-busting before. Some fools of the broncho breed had let 'Mad Willie' down by giving this man victory. Oh, horrible thought! And so he plunged up and down again, shooting out his back-feet like the piston-rod of an engine, then shaking his head violently, and off to his fancy side-jump and pawing of the air once more.

Meantime Nick stood chewing his gum and watching the fray. That hundred dollars was surely vanishing. The red-headed guy, who in mufti had resembled a hayseed or a harvester, had upset Nick's calculations. It had never occurred to Nick that Spud was a North-West policeman in plain clothes. But there he was, upholding the traditions of the wonderful force which never fails; whose creed it is that they must do or die, and never return to their unit without the laurels of victory. 'A darned strange force,' mused Nick. Men

from anywhere but horse-keeping ranches. Some, like Spud, had never seen bronchos till they mustered in the riding-school. But those riding-masters—some of them Cockneys, too—from His Majesty's Lancers, Hussars, and Dragoons had trained these 'Mounties' to conquer Arabs from Arabia, walers from Australia, man-eaters from the Argentine, and bronchos of the plains. This was the second surprise for Nick that day. 'The Hon. Arthur, with the modesty of the Englishman, said he couldn't ride a wild horse, but wanted to do it 'just to keep his end up.' Spud, with the self-assurance of the Scot, said he *would* ride; and, by Gee! he was holding his bet down. No wonder Nick was puzzled. Britishers, he honestly believed, were more or less damned fools; at least the majority looked it—which they do. There is something slow, even bovine, about the make-up of our race. Taciturnity and stolidity personified! Americans like Nick were 'all there,' quick-eyed, quick-tongued, as sharp as Parnell at seizing a point, and in controversy, incontrovertible. The last word and the last kick! They had won the War of Independence, won the war in Cuba, and the moral effect of their entry into the

European War had assured victory for the Allies, which accounted for many Americans honestly believing that they 'won the Great War.' And wasn't the U.S.A. a darned fine country? Yes, sir! Which it is. The progress of America within the last fifty years has been marvellous. To belittle that achievement is to belittle the Anglo-Saxon race. The superiority of Americans is the superiority of youth—the young man crowing over his father. In the desperate struggle to give a national spirit to the cosmopolitan horde that has recently surged into America, the powers that be have been compelled to adopt the gospel of 'America did it.' But the good American knows that he owes much to the Old World, owes much to 'the stupid Englishman' and the dogmatic Scot. And Nick was a real good American. Rough, maybe, but a Westerner. The real Westerner with all his bounce is a white man who has gained the sporting instinct through difficult jobs in the backwoods and heartbreaks on the ranges. And so Nick watched the red-headed policeman keeping his end up. Spud did not sit the saddle so easily as the Hon. Arthur; his thighs were too round and thick; the Englishman is happier in the saddle. But

there was all the dourness of the Calvinist, plus the terrier-like spirit of the Gallowgate, coupled to the old tradition of 'The Mounted'—'do or die.'

Thus Spud conquered, and in the next turn with the saddle off, 'Mad Willie' loyally obeyed every touch of the rein and suggestion from the knee. Tearing at full gallop, Spud bent down and picked up the handkerchief three times. A roar of applause burst from the crowd.

'Well done, Spud!'

'Hooray for "The Mounted"!'

'Say!' shouted Nick, running forward, 'you're a He-Man. I'm real glad to know you'; and he shook Spud warmly by the hand. 'I would have been as sick as a cow with a dead calf if you had had cold feet, for my old grandmother came from Scotland.'

The good American is proud of his pedigree.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WANDER THIRST.

Beyond the East the Sunrise ; beyond the West
the Sea ;
And East and West the Wander Thirst that will
not let me be.
It works in me like madness to bid me say
good-bye,
For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh ! the
call of the sky !

GERALD GOULD.

THE above quotation is the secret of colonisation and the reason for our empire. Britain is a sea-girt isle tenanted by a hundred tribes with salt in their nostrils and with eyes that ever sweep the far horizon. We are only happy in action. At the halt, when cribbed, cabined, and confined, we are indolent and insolent. Almost every Britisher has the spirit of a king, proud, imperious, and daring. The hundred tribes were the cream of Europe—conquerors who were conquered by the moods and mysteries of our land. The spirit of the mariner-soldier-adventurer is deep. To-day we are a nation of shop-

keepers, but, inwardly, we detest the business. Economic pressure forced us to the mine, the loom, and the selling of ham and eggs. But our hearts are in the meadows or the high lands. We hunger for the turret, broad acres, the prancing steed, and the open road. We love romance, beauty, action, and far scenes. Roman soldiers, Norman invaders, Norse Vikings, Venetian peddlers, Celtic dreamers, and many others are responsible for the wander thirst. Heredity tells. We must move. We must colonise. And we have always won.

Another reason for our greatness is our climate. It chills the men of the East and drives Southerners insane. It varies like a babe, bites like the lash, and, at times, soothes man to sleep and dreams. But, in the main, our climate compels resistance to the wind, the rain, and the snow. So we started as cave-men, hiding away from the blast. We are still cave-men, hiding in caves of brick and stone. Necessity invented the harvest. Unlike the natives of the Southern Seas, we cannot wait till tomorrow. The cows must be put to bed, and the turnips wintered under earth or straw. Nature has roused our energies,

hard times created the spirit of adaptability and invention. We owe much to our climate; and we hate our climate too. That is why we have *worked*, and why we grouse. But we *always* finish the job.

The Crusades were in defence of the Right, but many who went to Palestine went in search of the Sun. The Scottish Guards, who for centuries guarded the kings of France, were glad of a climate which was merciful to the nose and the knees. We have pushed to India, Egypt, and other parts, impelled, it is true, by the wander thirst, also hungering for the sun. With Alfred Noyes we sing:

‘Beyond the light of far Carthay,
Beyond all mortal dreams,
Beyond the reach of night and day
Our El Dorado gleams,
Revealing—as the skies unfold—
A star without a stain,
The glory of the Gates of Gold
Beyond the Spanish Main.’

And we still have a pagan strain, for we love strange women and wine. Half the wars of Britain are linked to the love tales of captains and kings. Our austerity, our reserve, is but a veneer. Shelley, Burns,

and Byron were dismissed for speaking the truth. Kipling also tells the truth:

Gentlemen-rankers out on the spree,
Damned from here to Eternity.
God ha' mercy on such as we.
Bah! Yah! Bah!

Our women are descendants of willing captives made in the wars of the centuries. The result is that our women are the most charming in the world. Ask an American or a Frenchman; better still, ask an ex-soldier of the Overseas Forces. In the Great War, when the men from the Dominions entered the shops in Bond Street, Regent Street, and Oxford Street, they were struck dumb. Complexion! Figure! Manners! They had not seen the like before.

This is not a catalogue of vices and virtues, merely a statement of historical facts which we must understand when dealing with the Empire. You now know how we came to Britain, why we got into hides and plus-fours, the reason for selling ham and eggs, and the cause of our wandering abroad. Within the last hundred and fifty years the movement has been westward. In moving westward across Canada we were lured, first of all, by wild game—the moose, the beaver,

the fox, the buffalo, and the bear. The next 'stunt' was hunting for masts and timber for 'the wooden walls of England.' And then the Old World got tired of the shooting business. Somebody told somebody it was all nonsense forming fours and marching young Britain all over Europe. Parliament sounded the 'Cease Fire,' the sergeant-major said 'Dismiss,' and into a cold world went the last remnants of the feudal bands who had fought at Fontenoy, Culloden, and Waterloo. Hunger, pride, and the wander thirst commenced a greater westward move. Ever since the tide has rolled. Over 250,000 pass through Winnipeg each year.

The point is that while economic pressure has played a big part in migration, the wander thirst has played a greater part. It is true that in the soul of the colonist of the past and the present is revolt—revolt against cities, factories, and congestion. But above personal needs or political terrorism has been the thirst for new scenes, new faces, and fresh worlds to conquer. That spirit is priceless; it is the key of colonisation and the secret of our wealth and power. More important, it has enlarged our vision and rid the soul of many petty en-

cumbrances. A wide experience has made us calm. We are never in a hurry and not easily roused to anger. We can stand a lot, even from tubby-tummied sultans of trumpery principalities. We simply do not know defeat. We were beaten three times during the Great War—Mons, The Dardanelles, and Amiens—but no one was aware of it.

Now and then there arises in our Dominions a young man in a hurry who corners a portfolio and vows before God and man that he will stand no more from the Old Country, he will cut the painter. Yes, sir. We only smile. When he comes over for a week-end we take him to Westminster Abbey and then home for lunch. After lunch he begins to wonder 'what the h—— he has been talking about,' for he has suddenly discovered that there is no painter to cut, and the nice people who are talking to him have no prejudices. And then he sees a picture, a garden, or a coat of arms that has been there for about five hundred years. Like a flash comes the old pride of race, and back he goes with a gun to look for the man who would 'cut' the invisible tie.

This is not propaganda, but history. You can verify this by a chat with any Ameri-

can professor in Harvard or Yale. One of those professors, when speaking of the British Empire, said, 'The scheme's so big, so muddled, so unorganised, that it can only be injured in parts, not destroyed as a whole.' This man gave many reasons for our strength, but he missed the wander thirst. Unfortunately, the Great War has injured the wander thirst. A riot of pleasure has swept over the British Isles. From the stern routine of war men have plunged into the pursuit of pleasure and doles. The Roman legions did the same. The Janissaries did likewise. Nothing is new, but this is new to Britain.

What we need to-day is a Press that will seek out all our Scarlet Pimpernels, Robinson Crusoes, and Buffalo Bills; rouse the spirit of adventure, proclaim the glory of the open road. Unfortunately, Fleet Street and the provinces reflect the spirit of the age. In 'the street of adventure' and in the provinces one meets young journalists scared stiff at the thought of leaving the Old Country with a suit of pyjamas and a £5 note. No risks! So much per week! An engagement with Gertie at 6.30! This is the dead-sure philosophy, the stuff that turns Bennet Burleigh in his grave. Think of R. L.

Stevenson, spitting blood, and the physician's death-warrant lying on his desk, writing:

Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above
And the road below me.

If the commerce of our empire is to be developed and maintained, newspaper-owners must push their writers over the seas. Once there, the glory of the open road will seize their souls. They will tramp in the footsteps of heroes. And in Canada will be found the meat of novelists. At a glance men will see the glory of our race. To have conquered forests, swamps, Red Indians, buffaloes, and '40 below' is an amazing achievement. Spanning a continent with rails of steel was a mighty thing. And cutting through the Canadian Pacific Rockies, the glory of glories, the immortal feat of Sandford Fleming, Moberley, and Van Horne.

The triumphs of colonisation are greater than the triumphs of war. Carving out a homestead is a long drawn out battle, with all the ingredients of comedy and drama. Here we find how blood tells. Here we prove that we have the pride of kings and the tenderness of babes. Here we see

our women in all their sweet majesty and power. And here we find the glory of God carried aloft by ministers of all denominations—men who scorned the easy way, so that in the hour of hardship or peril men and women should have the solace of the spirit and the sermon from the mount. Thinkers will realise that migration and colonisation are imperial affairs, and the best defence is a wise race settled upon broad acres. Here, too, is the cure for over-population, and the remedy for political bitterness, which congestion always brings. Robert Service says:

‘If you leave the gloom of London and you seek
a glowing land,
Where all except the flag is strange and new,
There’s a bronzed and stalwart fellow who will grip
you by the hand,
And greet you with a welcome warm and true;
For he’s your younger brother, the one you sent
away,
Because there wasn’t room for him at home;
And now he’s quite contented, and he’s glad he
didn’t stay,
And he’s building Britain’s greatness o’er the
foam.’

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